

Image & ILLUSTRATION:

Los Angeles Film Center

by

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B.A. Architecture
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Submitted to Department of Architecture in
Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements of the
Degree of Master of Architecture
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Submitted to the Department of Architecture on 9, May 1986
in Partial Fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of
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2. Abstract

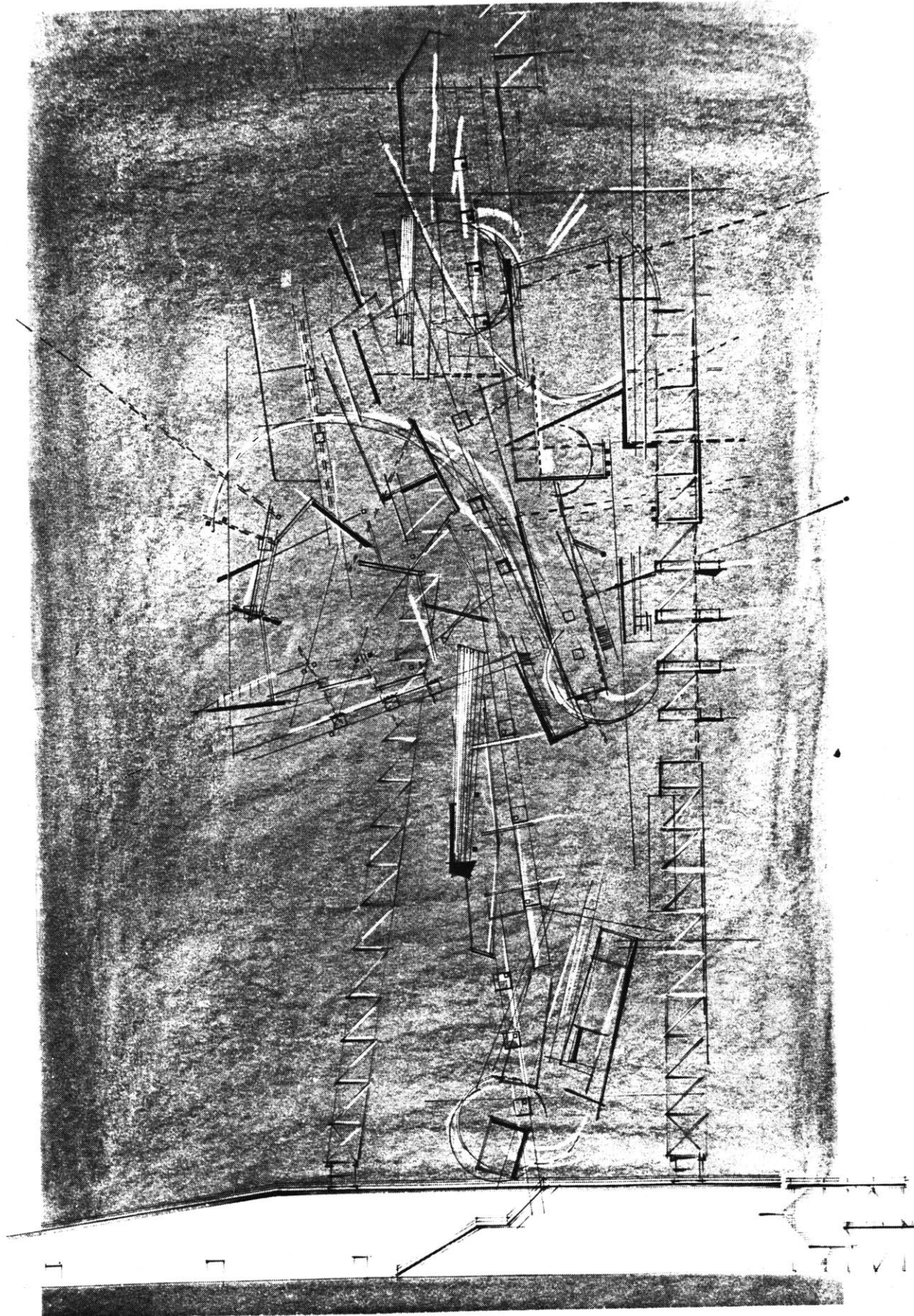
To think about Los Angeles is like sitting in front of the television and switching the channels while keeping track of all the shows. It is a complex place: it has many divergent styles and images trying to make up a whole. Los Angeles is about images and imagery; its tradition and commitment to the movie industry and other media makes Los Angeles a logical place for a film center: a center for the moving image. Presently there is neither a location for the film festival nor a public building to study and to learn about the motion picture. This thesis explores through design the possibilities for the Los Angeles Film Center located in the existing Pan Pacific Auditorium.

Because of the expanding use of visual communication from the media, film and video, I am interested in adopting an architectural form which can display and preserve an infinite amount of visual information. Los Angeles establishes a framework for the film center which is layered with meanings and interpretations. The city evokes a multitude of images visualized and understood at many different levels by many different people. Not only are varied images important, but over time their associations vary and adopt new meanings. The Los Angeles Film Center must be adaptable to variations and perceptions, yet be an element of the city which maintains its presence. This design therefore acknowledges the larger scale of

the city. The existing Pan Pacific facade is already established as a "set piece" in the Los Angeles fabric. The inner structure, the new film center is designed to evoke emotion, to set standards into conflict, as well as to be inspiring and challenging for the visitor.

In the design, the existing facade of the Pan Pacific is a linear registration for the activities introduced on the site. The larger city scale, the vastness of Los Angeles is introduced on the site by the automobile ramp which sweeps and rises in front of the entrance. The scale is referenced by maintaining the general direction of Los Angeles, but the steel towers positioned on a shifted grid establish a separate order for the Film Center. There are three basic territories which help to define the Film Center: first the display, projection area with the theatres, exhibitions and other public facilities, second, the library, archives and study building set in the park, in front of the facade and finally the third is the administrative, loading, shipping and receiving area closest to the street. The parts of the building are set both to operate as a whole as well as independently from each other. A microcosm of Los Angeles itself, the Film Center is a layering of simultaneous events which offer a multitude of images both real and imagined, perceived and interpreted at varied levels.

Thesis Supervisor: William L. Porter
Title: Professor of Architecture and Planning



3. Acknowledgements

*The universe is the mirror in which we
can contemplate only what we have
learned to know in ourselves.*

Italo Calvino, Mr. Palomar

Mostly I just want to thank the people who encouraged me to pursue architecture.

To my family:

My parents for their faith in me and their unending encouragement.
Eric, Anne and Philip who keep things in perspective and me in line.

To my friends:

To those outside of school - and you know who you are.
To those at MIT especially to Hassan, Mary and Jane who were in close proximity in every way.

To Brian for editing and who took me away from the thesis from time to time.

To Bill Porter, my advisor who let me try out what I wanted and his support in my trail and error.

To Michael Hays, my reader, for introducing many insights to contemporary architecture.

and especially

To Maurice Smith to whom I acknowledge a most warm and appreciative thanks for being the most important teacher/advisor I've had at MIT, for his dedication to teaching, to his interest in students and to education.

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5. Introduction

Los Angeles for me is an enigma because of the transformation in my perceptions of it as a place. Upon my first memorable encounters with the City of the Angels I could not conceive why any body would care to remain longer than the time it took to make the long drive through its freeway network. Now I have an acquired affection for Los Angeles' scattered, even schizophrenic character and have invested the time in designing the Film Center better to understand the city.

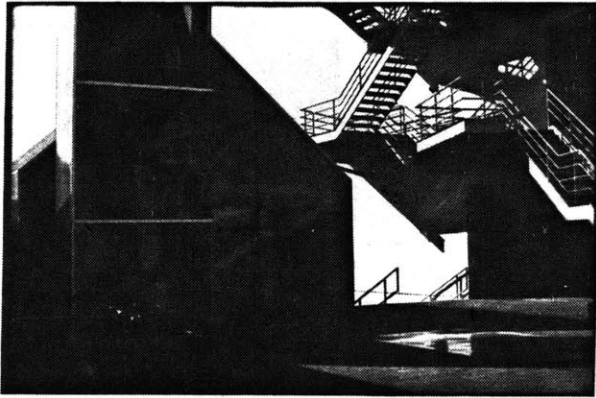
Although this thesis is the design for the Los Angeles Film Center, I feel it is critical to mention in more detail the characteristics of Los Angeles as a city, to try and understand it as a place, to make associations not only to its scale, but also at the look at the influence of films, the motion picture industry and other visual media. Part of the exploration in the design has been, therefore, a process to uncover some of Los Angeles' qualities, its context, both spatially and iconographically. It is also about how to introduce notions which exist in film such as movement, light, montage, simultaneity and



Aerial View of Freeway Exchange

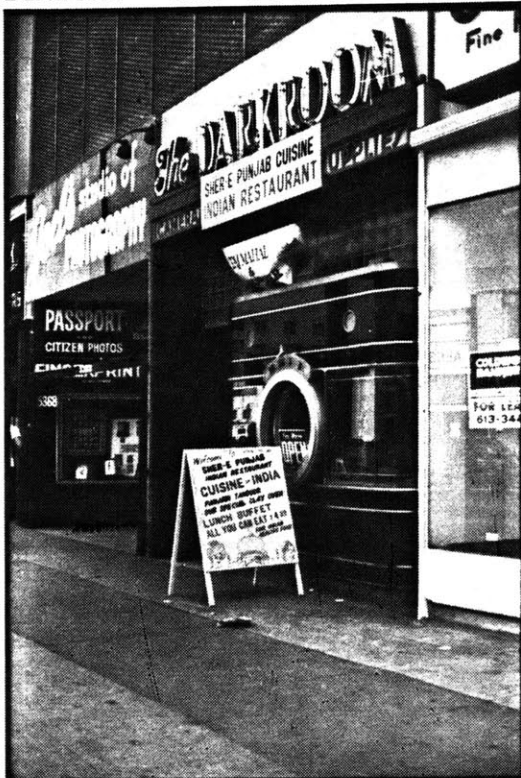
Bonaventure Hotel - Downtown L.A.





Loyola Law School - Gehry 1982

'Darkroom' - Mid Wilshire 1935



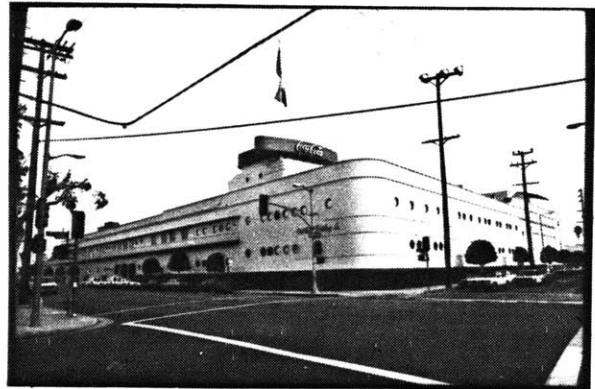
order/disorder, in order to generate the necessary forms for the film center. It has been an ongoing concern of mine to produce forms which are comtemporary and that will maintain the architectural intergity to last and transform as is programmatically necessary. The Los Angeles Film Center is intended to support changing visual art forms which are constantly being reinterpreted and redefined with the help of technological advancements.

Part of the attraction to designing a film center in Los Angeles is that my interest in new forms or new ways of using familiar forms and spatial relationships. Though there may be a type of regionalism associated with the "Southland": sun, oranges, beach, freeways, cars, kistch, adobe, much of the current work is not easily labeled by critics (rationalism, functionalism, classic, high tech, constructivist - yet they may be references). There is an intense energy one gets from the ability to design in a city where essentially 'anything goes'. Michael

Sorkin says: "Los Angeles has a rhetoric but no epistemology"¹

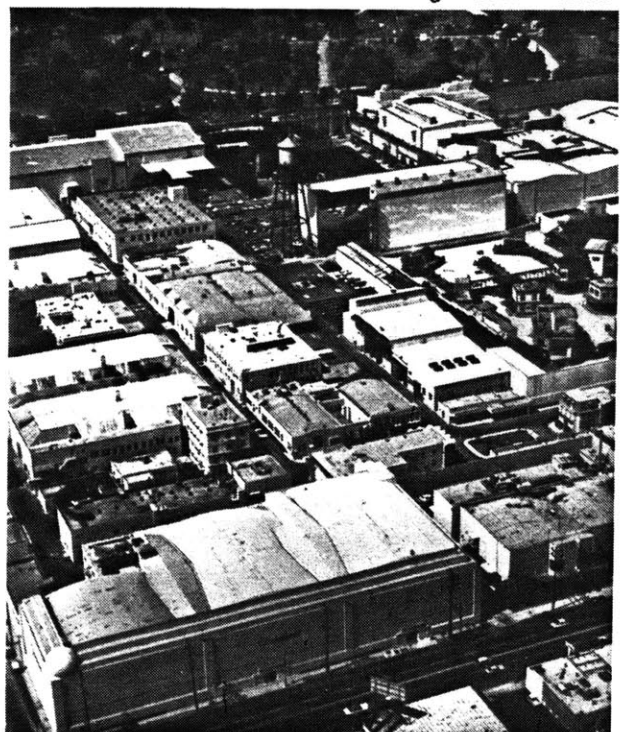
Inconsistencies are what Los Angeles is all about. Critics try to explain why the city has evolved the way it has it, however, continually surprises us. With this in mind two reasons the film center is appropriate in Los Angeles are: first because one is able to design a building for which there is not necessarily a precedent and second because of the multiple representations of reality which films provide. Whatever myth or meaning is given to the city, the "reality" of the film itself may change our preconceptions. The risky part then comes in deciphering what is real and to be taken literally from the visual "realities" seen on the screen.

There has been a change, in general, as to how we perceive the world due to the constant flow of visual information we see each day. We are dependent on what we have learned to accept as the two dimensional moving image. The tradition of film in Los Angeles makes a logical a

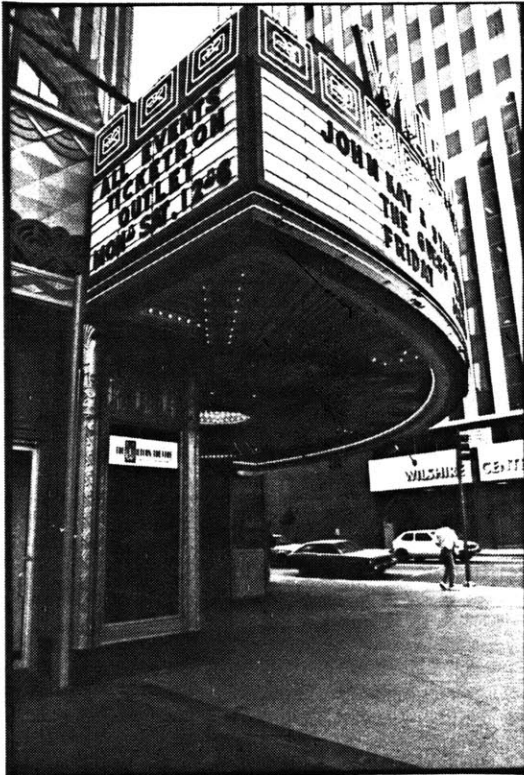


Coca-Cola Bottling Co. 1937

Paramount Studios - Stage Sets 1935

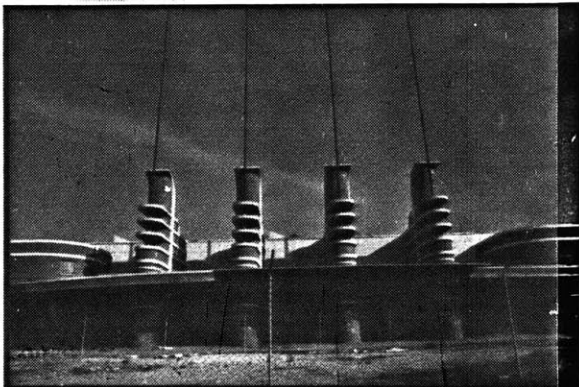


¹ California Counterpoint, p. 8



Wilton Theatre 1931

Pan Pacific Auditorium 1935

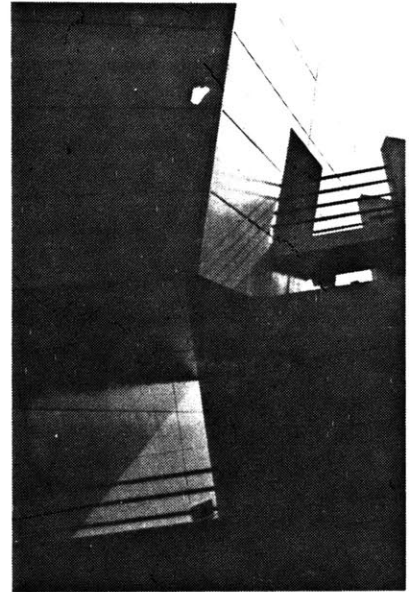


place for productions of the film industry to be at the disposal of the public. Therefore the Film Center is to make available aspects of visual information which exist to the public in a three dimensional world. The architecture is intended to confront the viewer with visual information, but also to serve and to educate the interested student or scholar.

The project is to place a Film Center in the Pan Pacific Auditorium itself. This reflects part of an interest the City of Los Angeles is taking to rehabilitate and reuse existing structures presumably to establish some continuity over time. The site itself is located in mid Los Angeles (see map) and is centrally located with respect to other landmarks and points of interest in the city. I will discuss later the existing building in more detail as well as the significance of its position as a landmark.

Current architectural trends based on 'inventiveness' in Los Angeles are due partly from the inconsistencies, the images and myths related to the city. Images about the weather, Disneyland, the automobile, the movies, the future to mention a few. The inconsistencies

themselves are formed from a disparate background, collisions of styles, ethnic mixtures each involved in a spectrum of activities ranging from agriculture to computers - from sunbathing to high art. This project embraces those qualities of California and Los Angeles which give to the place its evasive, captivating quality. This thesis for the design of the Los Angeles Film Center is therefore an attempt at putting this attitude of inventiveness, art, display of space and form in architecture in a city where this attitude is allowed to exist.



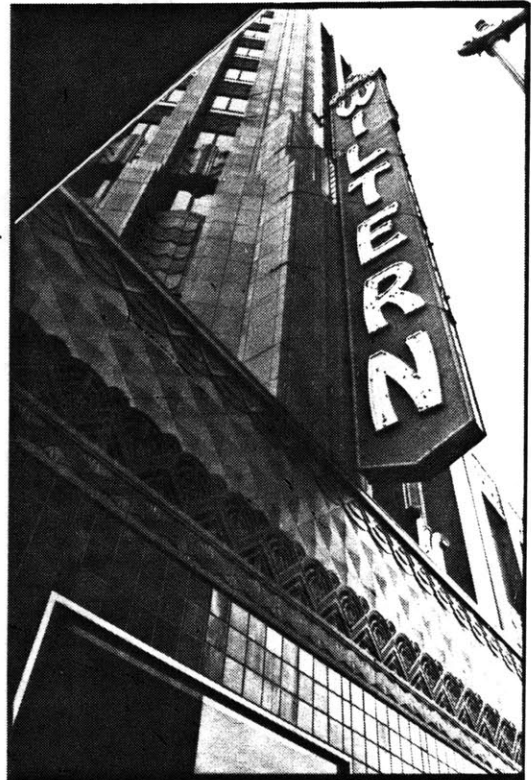
Areospace Museum - Gehry 1983

6. Context

There is no there -

Michael Sorkin about Los Angeles

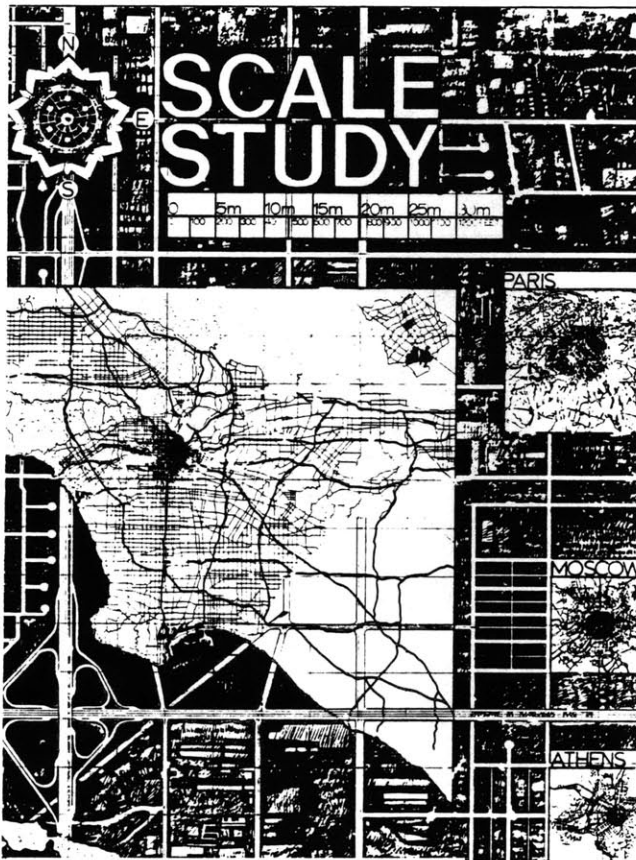
Los Angeles possesses a character but it is difficult to say whether or not it constitutes is a context. There are many different ways one may talk about Los Angeles. In this thesis it is important to take the context of Los Angeles as a given. Places in the city are made by associative, dimensional and environmental qualities. In an "Architectural Design" issue dedicated to Los Angeles, John V. Mutlow describes Los Angeles as being comprised of a series of 'stage sets.' 'Stage Sets' comprised of architectural pastiche and kistch. The 'sets' or pieces in the city are apparent because of their eclectic style and juxtaposition with surrounding elements. There are many so-called landmarks in Los Angeles which range from all eras of the 20th century like Union Station, City Hall, Griffith Park, but it is the neighborhoods and bungalows which give Los Angeles its character. "Centers" like Downtown, Century City, Westwood and Santa Monica



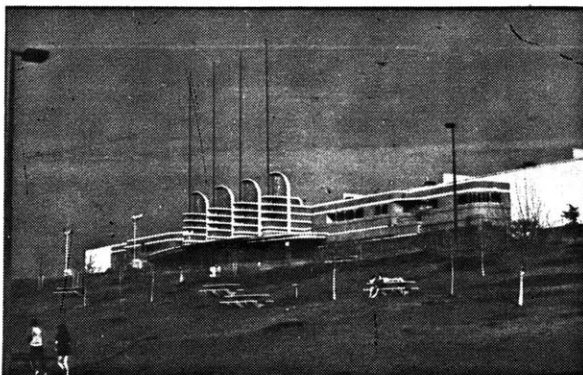
Wilshire Theatre 1935



Union Station



*Scale Study by Graeme Morland
Pan Pacific from Park*



help to establish relative distance between neighborhoods and landmarks. Unlike the set pieces, the "stuff" represents the continuity, a texture and a sense of place that the eclectic and diverse buildings cannot do. Dimensionally it is difficult to comprehend sizes or consistencies in the city because of its dispersion. Reyner Banham in his book about Los Angeles observes:

One can most properly begin learning the local language: and the language of design, architecture and urbanism in Los Angeles is the language of movement. Mobility outweighs monumentality there to a unique degree... and the city will never be fully understood by those who cannot move fluently through its diffuse urban texture....

One tends to make associations with scale by the time it takes to travel from one landmark to another like on the freeway system. As Banham points out, one must learn the city by traveling through it to understand the scale.

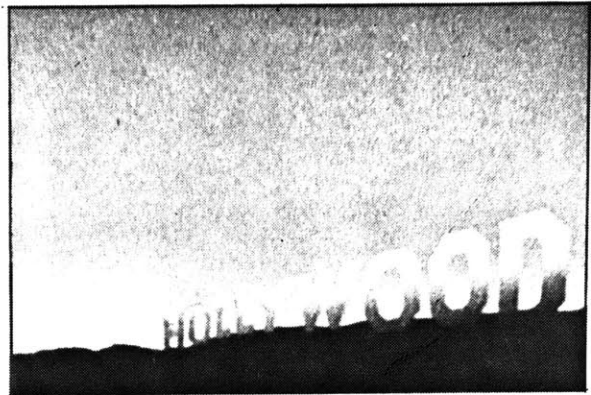
The Pan Pacific Auditorium and the surrounding site is a place which is of monumental scale, a scale that one can understand from a distance and by passing quickly by in a car. In order to look at



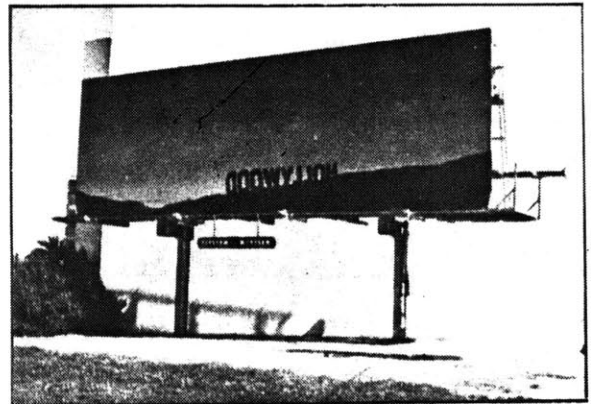
dimensional and associative qualities of Los Angeles, it helps to observe issues that give relationship to some of the volumes in the city. Barbara Goldstein (editor for "Arts and Architecture") says about Los Angeles:

There are monuments on the landscape isolated by time and distance. But more overwhelming than the physical place is the image people have of it. As the center of the worlds largest movie industry, Los Angeles has provided enough settings for the world to have a strong preconceived image of the city, one which is bigger and more flamboyant than the place itself.

One must therefore not let the 'images' or illusion of what is reality impair what is really going on. If traditionally the city is associated with certain isolated images which make up the character of Los Angeles then the experience is different for each individual. For example some of the images in Los Angeles are associated with film and the motion picture industry, Disneyland, car culture etc. One of the most memorable events recently in L.A was the 1984 Olympics. The challenge of this project was to unify the city and all the events for the games. The city transformed with color. banners, props - all temporary structures, making the place have a totally



'Hollywood' -Ed Ruska



Hollywood Billboard

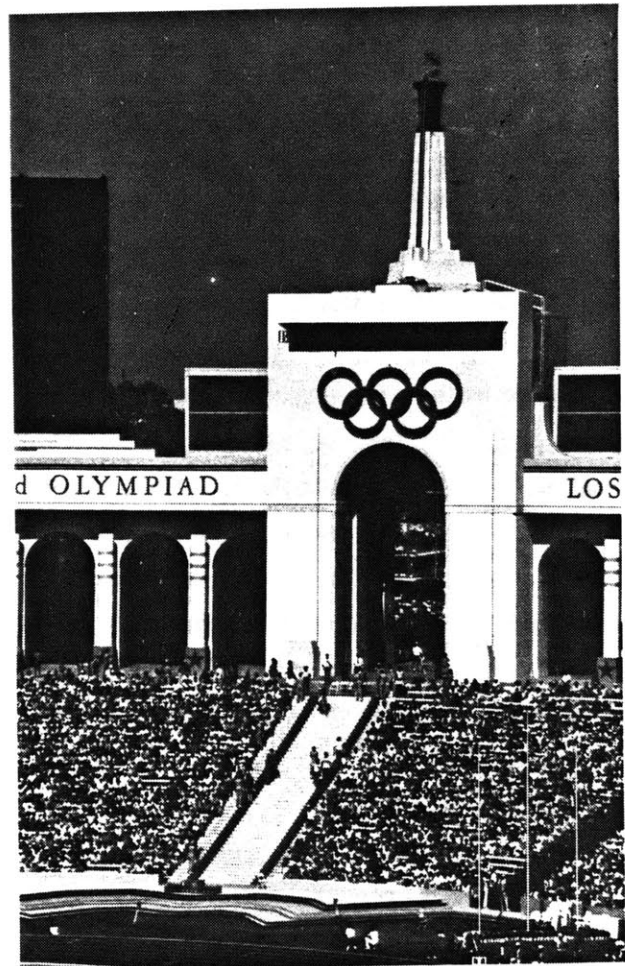


Liscence Plate

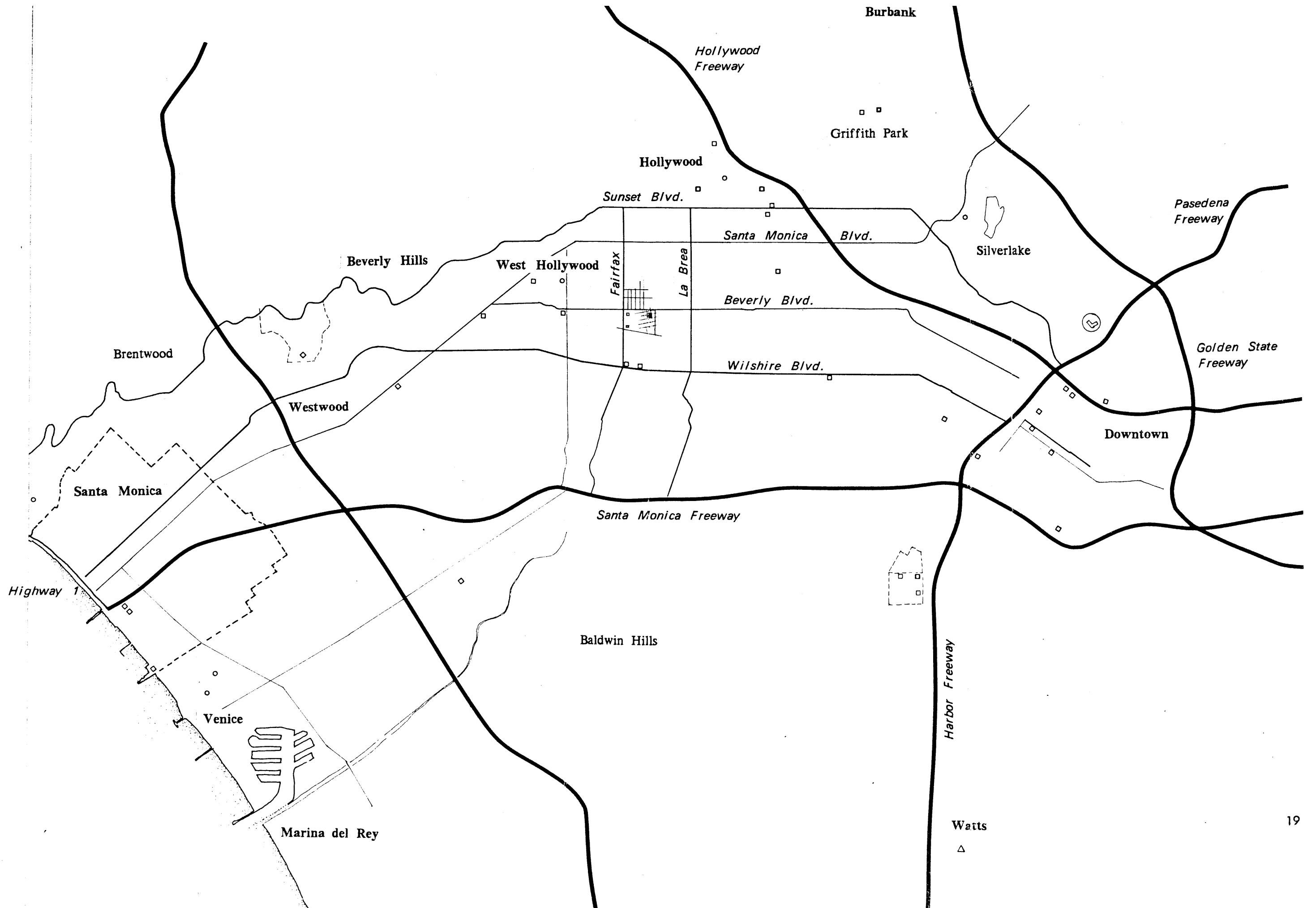
different experience for the visitors than for the inhabitants. Although the Olympics were brilliantly organized, the capacity for Los Angeles to adapt to such transformations made the games a success.

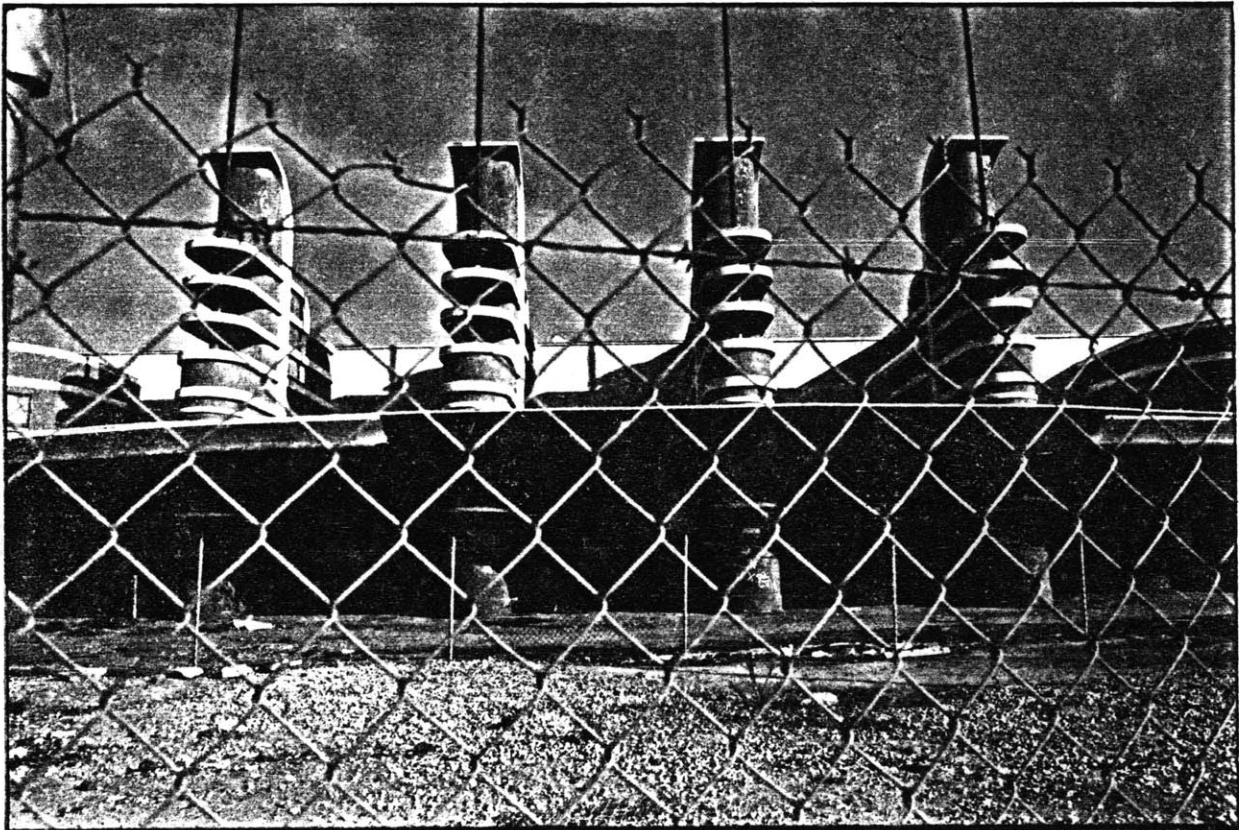


1932 Olympiad - Opening



1984 Olympiad

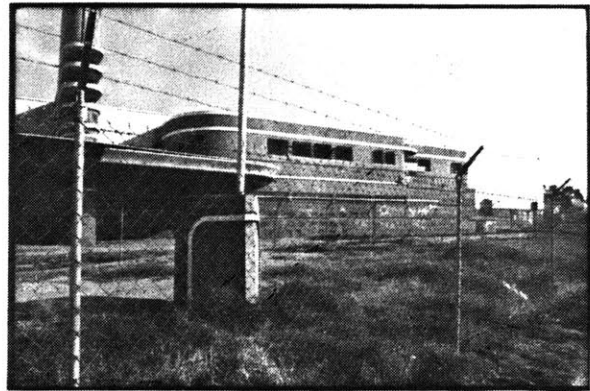




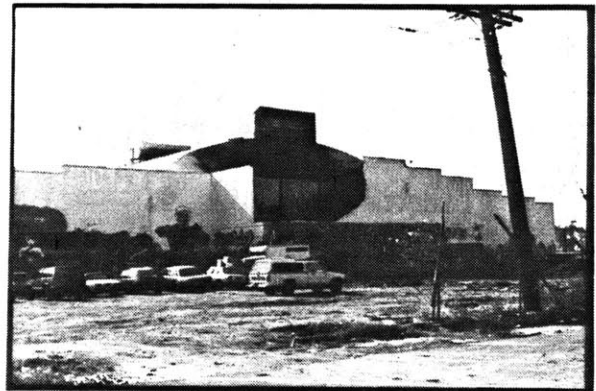
Pan Pacific Facade

7.1 History

The Pan Pacific Auditorium was built as a result of a competition proposed by the Los Angeles Housing Authority in 1935. The architects were to build a 100, 000 square foot exhibition space for a National Housing Exhibition that included requirements in the program to be "flexible, utilitarian, and of great beauty".¹ The winning architects Plummer, Wunderman and Beckett (a firm which still exists today), completed the requirements, and construction began only after two months of drawing: the building was completed in a record time of six weeks for a total cost of \$125,000. The National Housing Exhibition opened there in May 1935, the beginning of a long history of conventions, exhibitions, sports events, political rallies, and performances of all kinds. The auditorium capacity was expanded several times in small increments. Finally its usefulness terminated and its doors closed in 1974. Because by this time

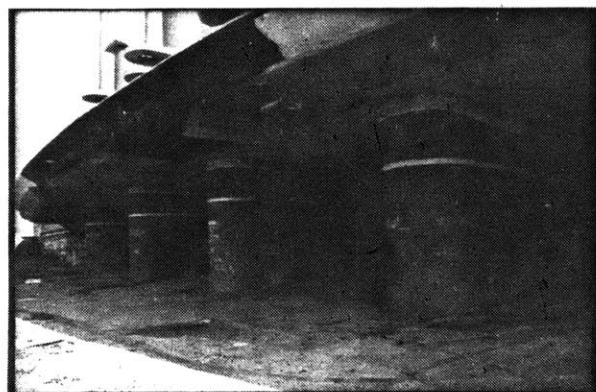


view to the south

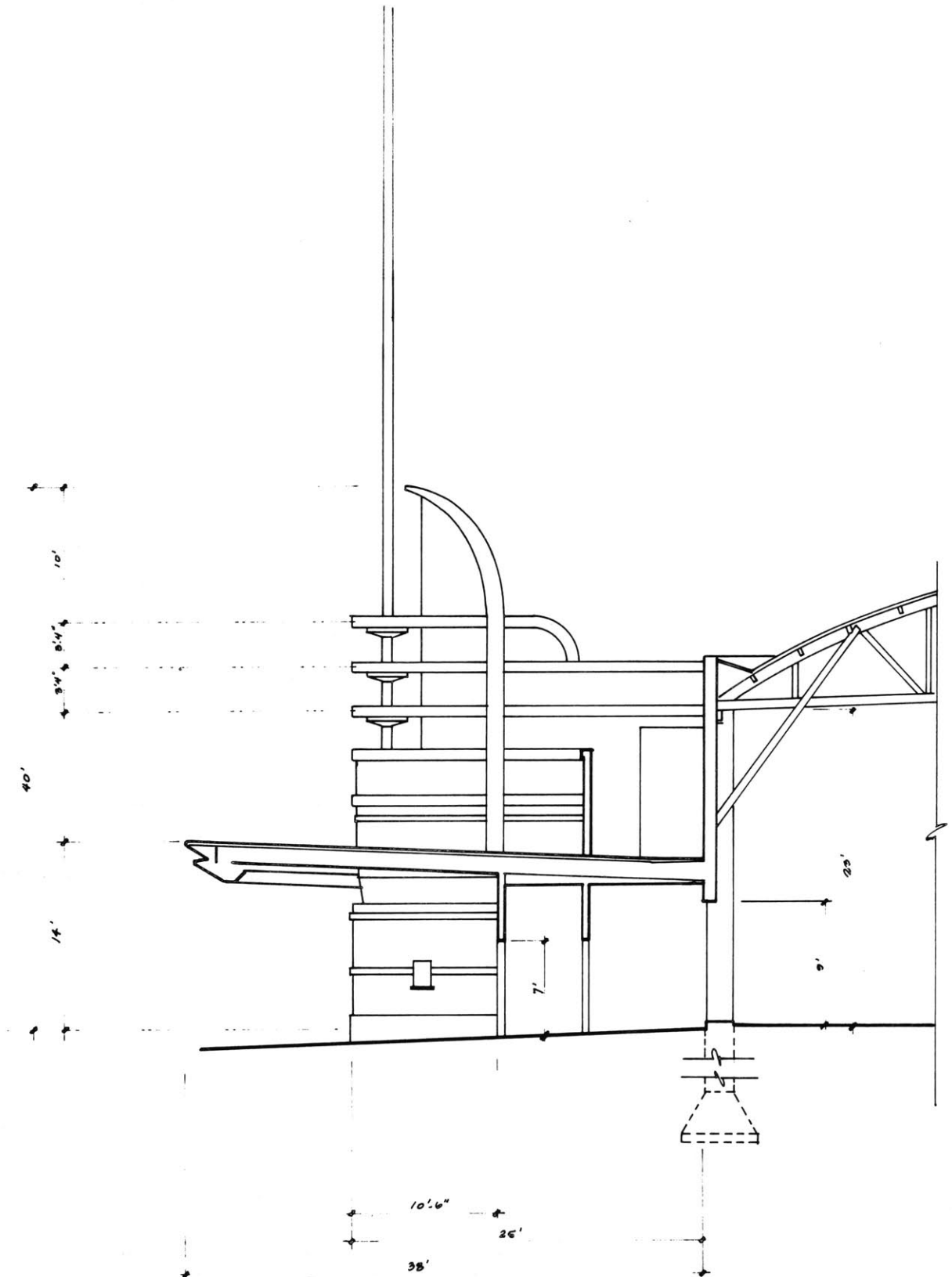


existing shell

entrance



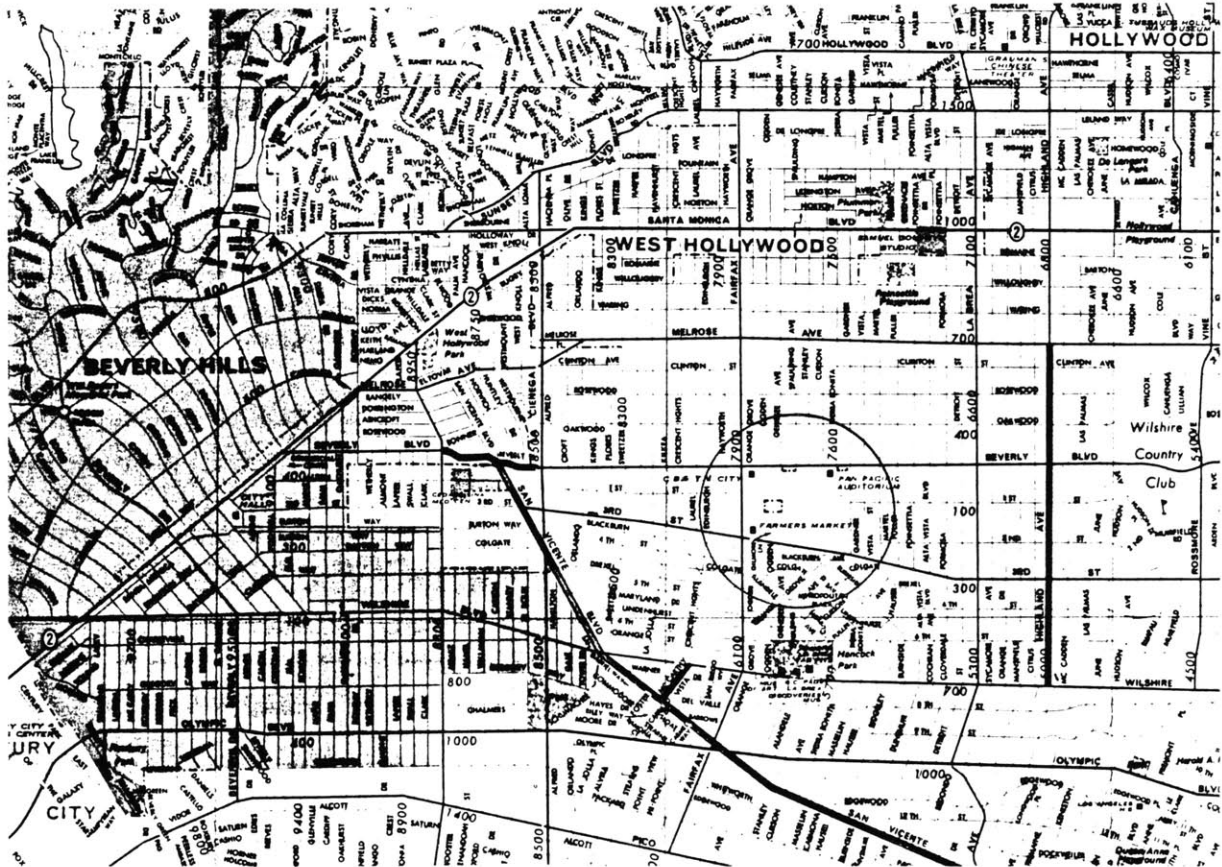
¹ Pan Pacific Auditorium - Historical Restoration Report, Raymond Girvigian, FAIA, May 1980, Section 2, D, p. 3



Existing Facade - Section

Architectural floor plan of a large rectangular building, oriented horizontally. The plan features a grid system with vertical lines numbered 1 through 25 and horizontal lines lettered A through Z. The main rectangular area measures 250 feet in width (horizontal) and 60 feet in depth (vertical). A smaller section, measuring 20 feet in width and 60 feet in depth, is attached to the bottom center of the main area. This smaller section has a curved front edge with a radius of 20 feet. The plan includes a north arrow pointing towards the top right. Dimensions are provided for the main area (250' x 60') and the smaller section (20' x 60'). The grid lines are labeled with numbers 1 through 25 along the top and bottom edges, and letters A through Z along the left and right edges. The smaller section at the bottom has a curved front edge with a radius of 20' and a total width of 60'. The main area has a width of 250' and a depth of 60'. The plan includes a north arrow pointing towards the top right.

23



Map of Los Angeles - Rand McNally

Aerial View of Los Angeles: Note Gilmore Site and Pan Pacific for Scale



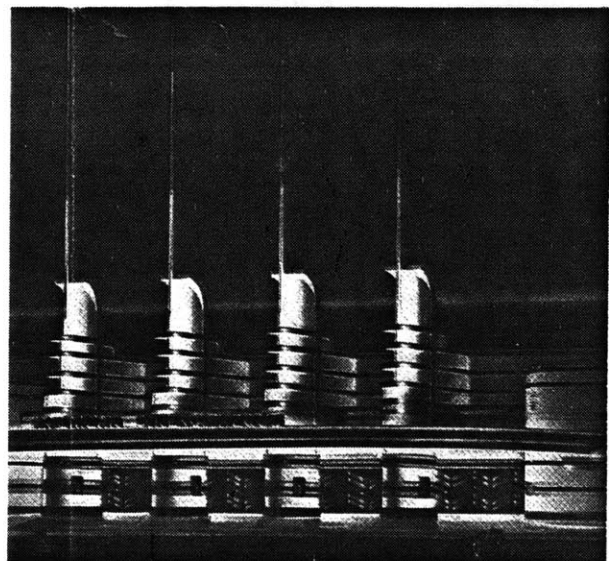
other new auditoria and other convention centers were built all over Los Angeles, the interest in maintaining and keeping up the building diminished; as usual the cost was more than the owner was willing to invest in.

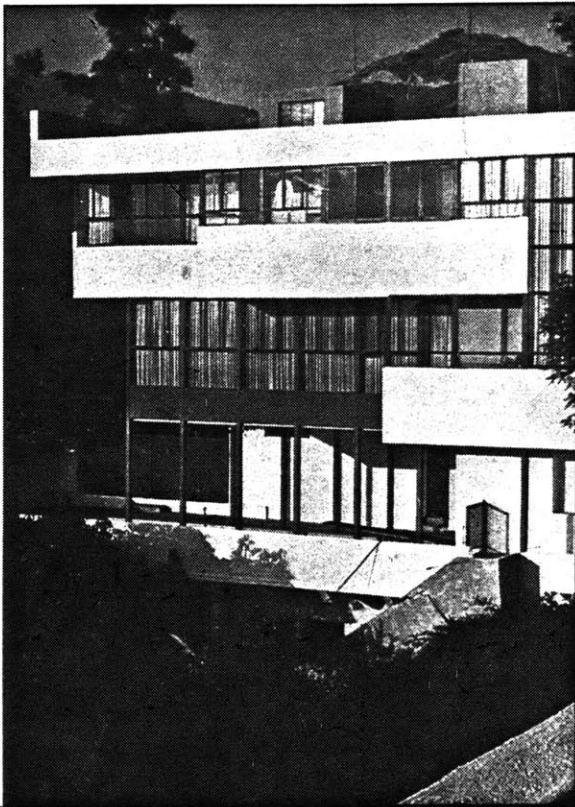
The Sommerset Development company along with other investors have acquired the Pan Pacific and will now restore the structure to its original condition. The new program for the site is a luxury 188 room Meridien Hotel and the American Cinematique and Film-Ex. Each will operate separately, but the services will support each other. Plans for the restoration were done by the architecture firm Gruen and Associates, construction is due to begin in June 1986 - however funding has been stalled due to mismanagement according to a recent Los Angeles Times Article. (Sunday April 27, 1986)

From an architectural point of view, the Pan Pacific Auditorium was a significant development. According to Raymond Girvigian, the auditorium is the only "Streamlined Futurist/Expo Moderne" example remaining in this country. It has been termed generally "streamline



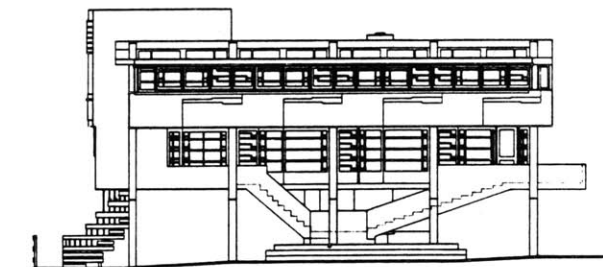
*Downtown and Convention Center
American Cinematique - Gruen Proposal*





Lovell Health House - Neutra 1929

Lovell Beach House - Schindler 1926

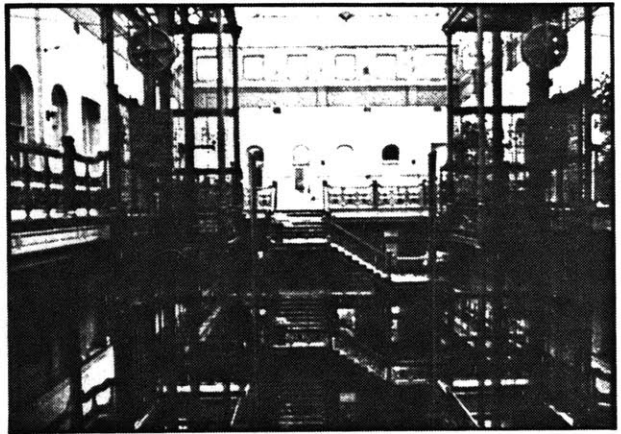


moderne", a substyle of the Modern movement in the 1920's and 1930's that also includes other sub-categories such as Art Deco, Nautical Moderne and so on. The National Housing Exhibition was not only the site for a new and contemporary building in Los Angeles during the 1930's depression: a "promise for a bright tomorrow", but it provided a major exhibition hall. Los Angeles was then as now, an important city in the promulgation of the modern movement in America. The works of R.M. Schindler, Richard Neutra, Frank Lloyd Wright testify to that role.

Concurrently with the construction of the Pan Pacific Auditorium industrial designers and the decorative arts are using the streamlined aesthetic to exemplify the quality of speed and efficiency in their designs. Appliances like refrigerators, radios in particular use the elongated parallel horizontal lines (usually three) that we see on the facade of the Pan Pacific. Art Deco, a more common and popularized style in Los Angeles during the 1920's and 30's, uses more decoration, ornamentation and geometry (as its name implies). There are still many examples of Art Deco which

are now popular properties to invest in for restoration in Los Angeles. It has been said that with the more conservative economical trends recently have moved people towards regenerating the past. Los Angeles has few rules: exemplifying the past is as legitimate as advocating the future.

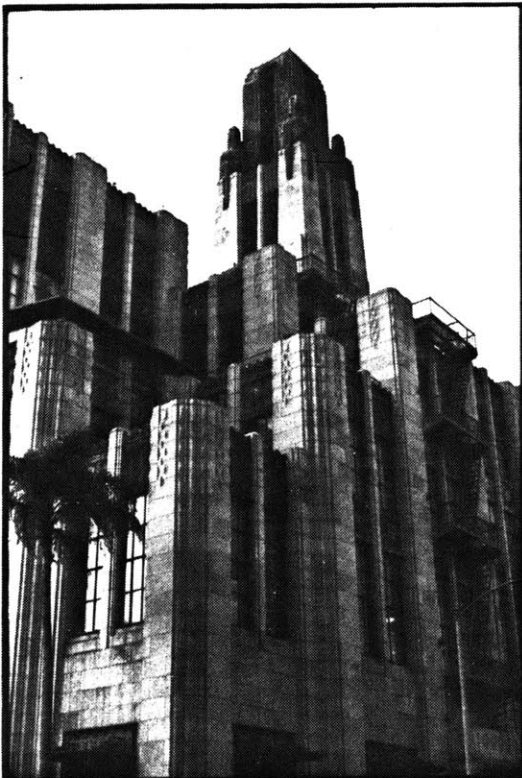
Bradbury Building 1898 - Stairwell



May Co. 1940



Bullocks Wilshire - Art Deco



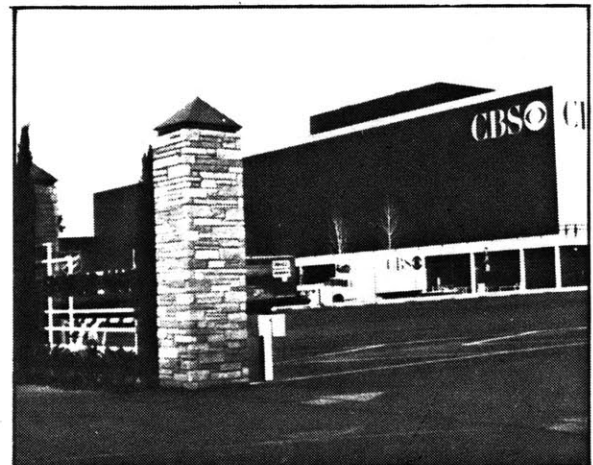
Coca-Cola Bottling Plant 1937 - Nautical Moderne





Aerial View of Gilmore Site before excavation of the land and removal of the Drive-in

CBS Television Studios 1952



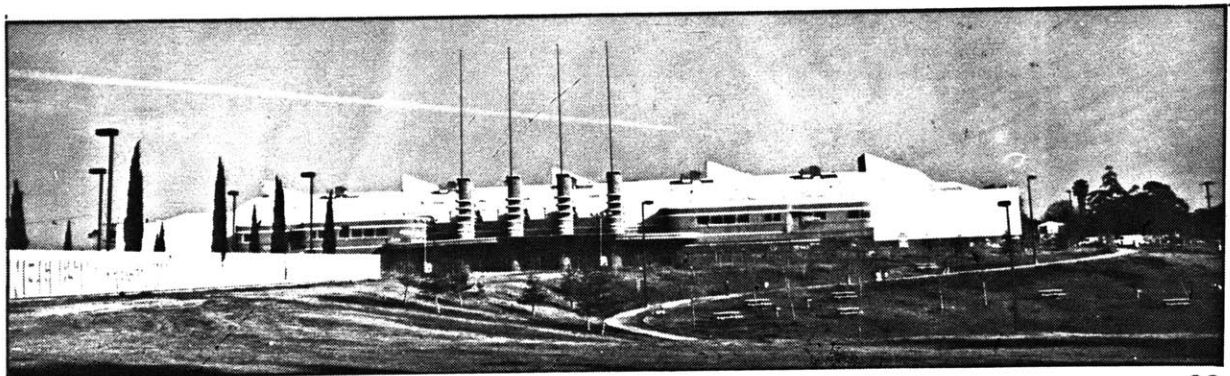
7.1 Location of Site

Known as the Gilmore Site, centrally located somewhere between Downtown and the ocean, the Pan Pacific Auditorium occupies only a small portion of the entire site. The general area I refer to is located between Third Street to the south, Fairfax Boulevard to the west, Beverly Boulevard to the north and a minor street, Gardner to the east. The major streets are lined with one story commercial strips, relatively non-descript. To the south is located Park La Brea (the well known La Brea tar-pits are close-by) an elderly housing project, the towers are the tall buildings in the photographs.

The Farmers Market on Third and Fairfax has been a landmark for a long time, but its visitors are usually (although I do not like to generalize) elderly tourists. CBS Television City is to the north on Fairfax

and Beverly, designed by William Pereria in the 60's. Much of the land between the dispersed buildings is parking, storage for the studios and some type of oil refinery - due to previous oils wells I would assume. The Pan Pacific Park itself is 25 acres with an adjacent Community Recreation Center on the eastern side. The open space is quite uncharacteristic of Los Angeles. There is actually little open space for the public with the beaches, hills and private yards. Behind the commercial strip is residential made of mostly one story stucco houses and walkup apartments.

The entrance to the film center is from Beverly Boulevard. The U.S. Post office obscures the views of the building driving east, but part of the structure will be visible from a distance, over the low profile of the existing buildings.



View of Pan Pacific across park

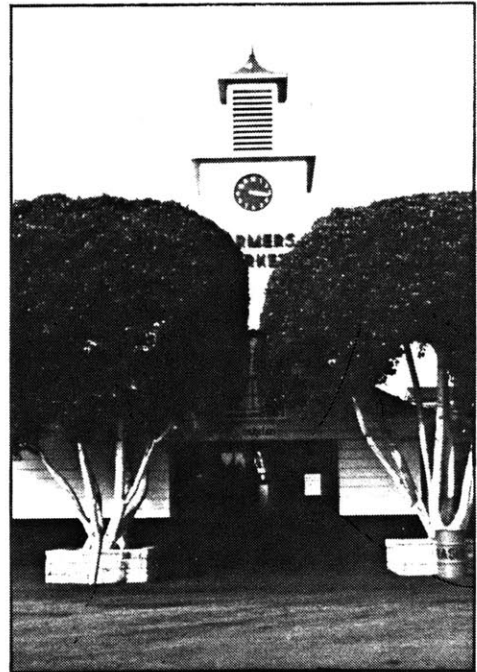
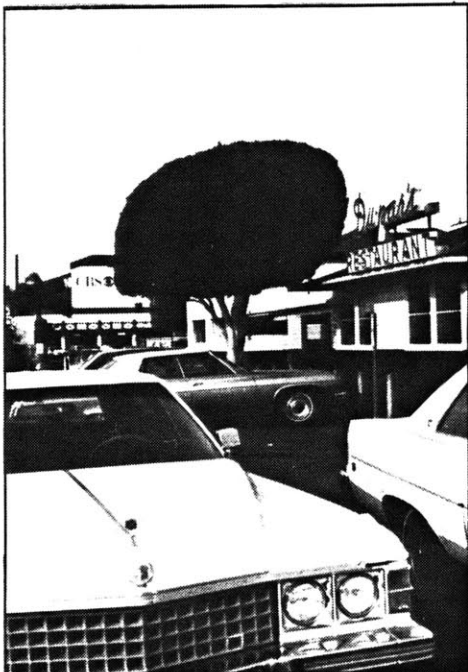


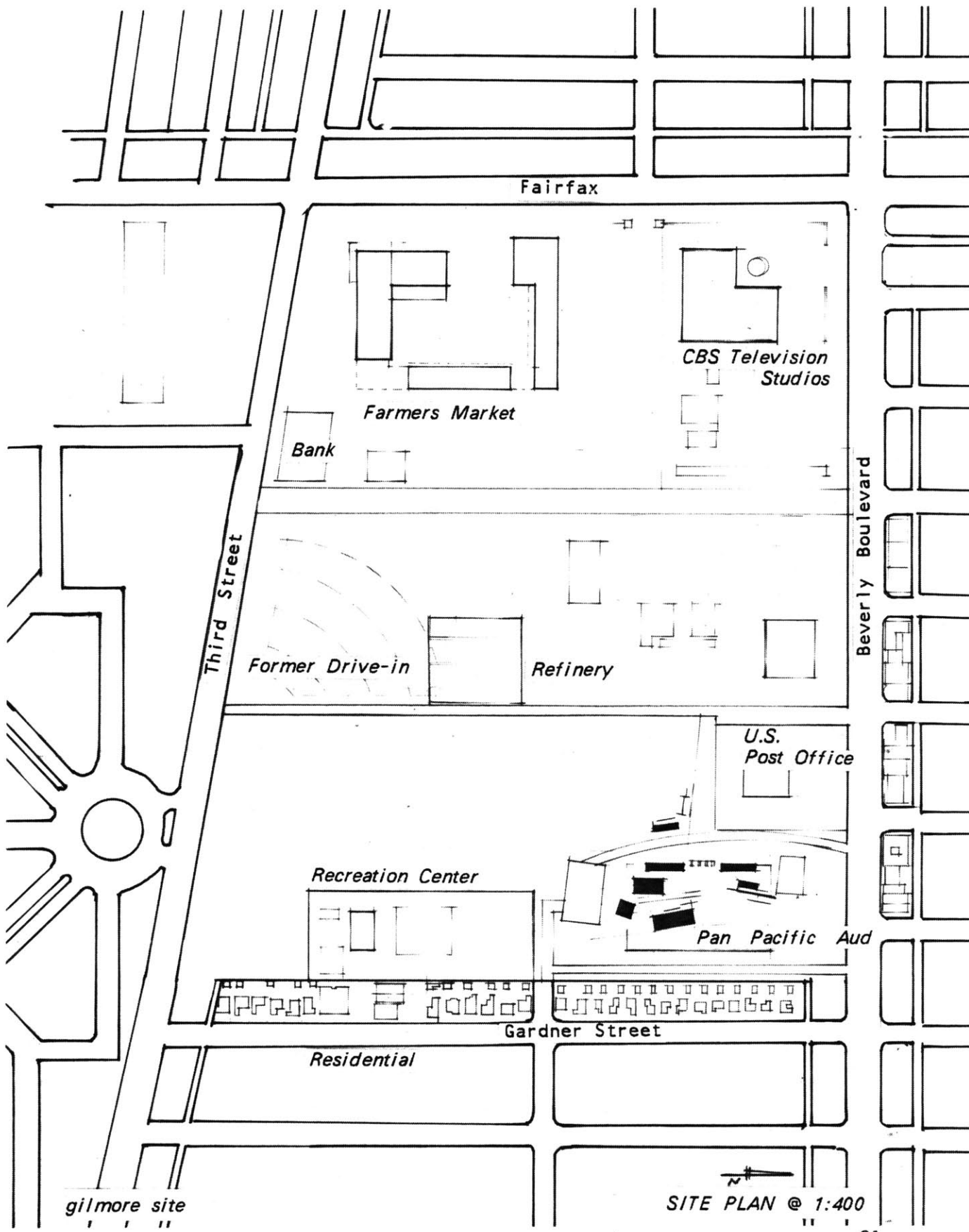
Beverly Blvd looking East from CBS



Third Street looking East from Fairfax

Farmers Market







Beverly Blvd looking West from Site





Beverly Blvd looking East from Site

View of park looking west in front of Pan Pacific





Plan with Layers of Structure and Access

....Now he needed a great variety of models, whose elements could be combined in order to arrive at the one that would best fit reality, a reality that, for its own part, was always made up of many different realities, in time and space.

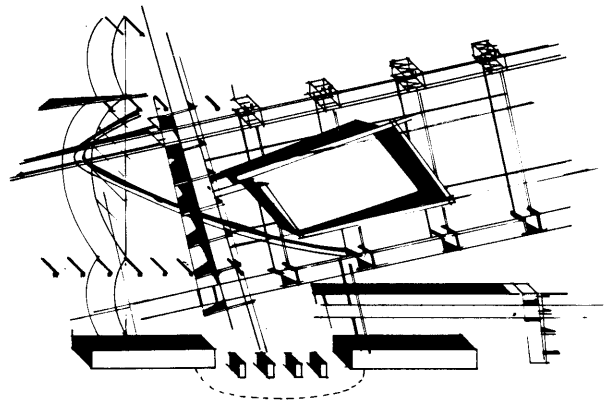
Italo Calvino. Mr. Palomar

8. Design

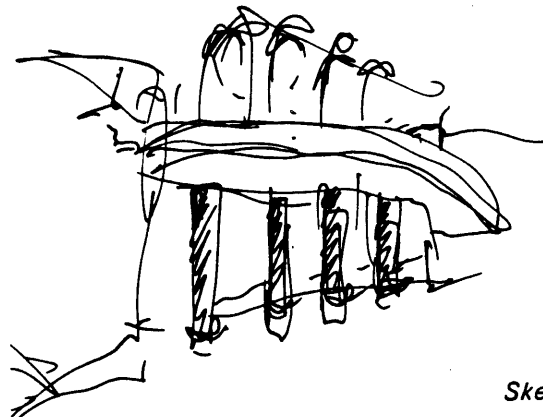
To design a film center in Los Angeles has been a task to understand aspects of the city's form and the nature of film it self and to describe the architecture which can respond not only the necessity of a film center but one for the future. The site is a large relatively uncharacteristic piece of land for Los Angeles except for the existing Pan Pacific Auditorium which I have already described.

8.1 Preservation

In a proposal made for the current developers (Sommerset) of the site and the building, it analyzes the historic importance of the Pan Pacific Auditorium. With a preservationist attitude, they recommend in keeping as much of the building intact as possible.¹ However, other schemes include various locations and shifts for the facade and/or the shell depending on the amount of money is available. As for my attitude about the building, the streamline facade

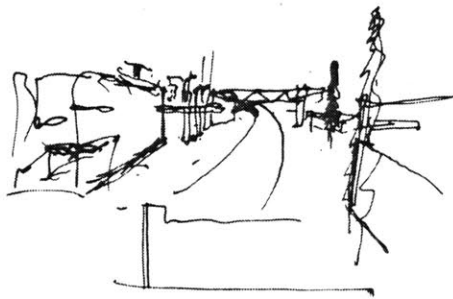


*Early
Plan w/ Moving Theatre and Tower Supports*



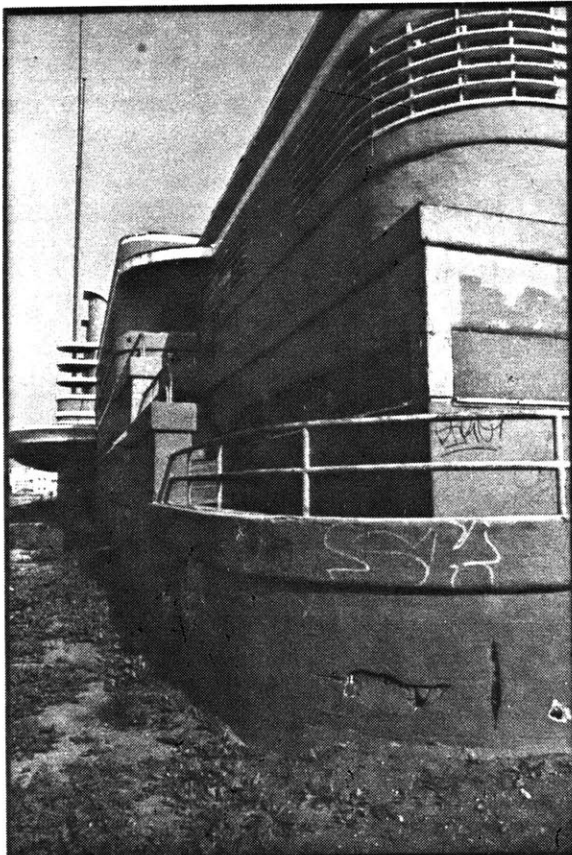
Sketch

¹ Historical Restoration Report - Pan Pacific Auditorium



Sketch

Facade piece - looking North



appeals to me for its eclectic yet romantic image. This facade is in the tradition of the elaborate false fronts, set pieces and stage props of classic Hollywood as well as the preoccupation with billboard advertising and pop art. In this way it evokes a certain manner of thinking about Los Angeles and its character. I therefore see the opportunity for the facade to be an introduction, a contemporary relic, an existing icon which would then transform into a place where images and illusions could be made and developed. The advantage of playing with what is real and imagined happens not only in the moving image but in the series of architectural elements making up the project. The facade is the first element perceived by the visitors, it is the element on display in front of the automobile ramp that sweeps up to the parking structure. I choose to maintain the existing facade as it is, to locate the film center behind it, maintain its location in the park, but not keep all of the existing shell.

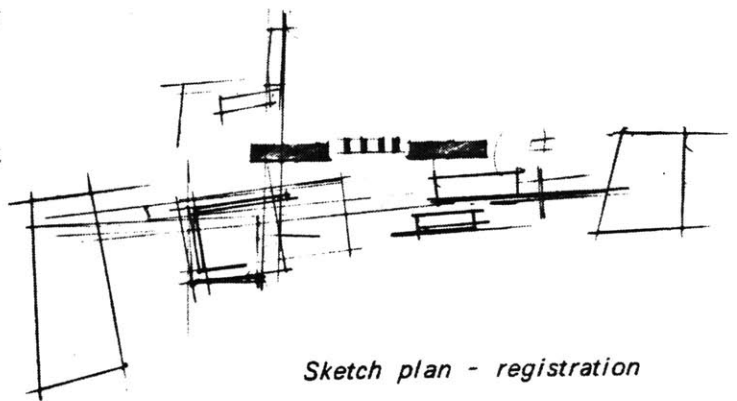
The west "facade" I refer to is actually a habitable territory, the two rectangular pieces are 20' by 80', the four columns are

spaced 20' apart and are ticket booths. The length of the ensemble are long enough for me to use the facade as a linear registration for the prominent direction in the design. The registration being a straight edge on one side and a stepped edge on the other. The facade edge is where the most intense activity occurs.

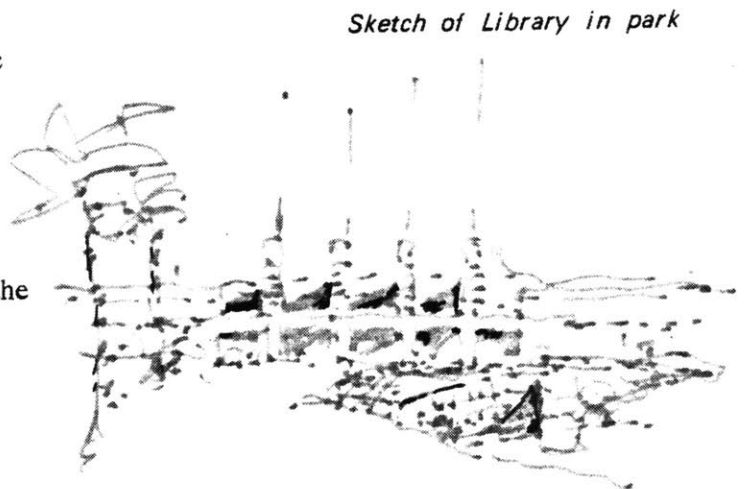
In order for the existing facade to maintain its own life as well as be integrated in to the film center I placed part of the new addition into the park. The plan is broken down into three basic territories: first the more public area: theatres, exhibition, display area located behind the facade and to the south or right from the entrance, second, the library, archives, screening rooms across the ramp in the park and third, the administrative area with offices, facilities for loading, shipping, receiving with its own parking structure for employees.

8.2 The Site

A formal exploration has been made in this design to determine the plan. First, I have been interested in the spatial qualities of Los Angeles through movement - the



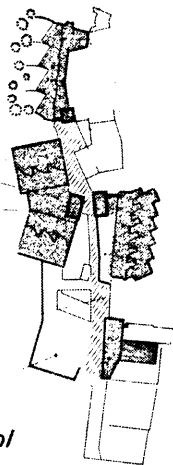
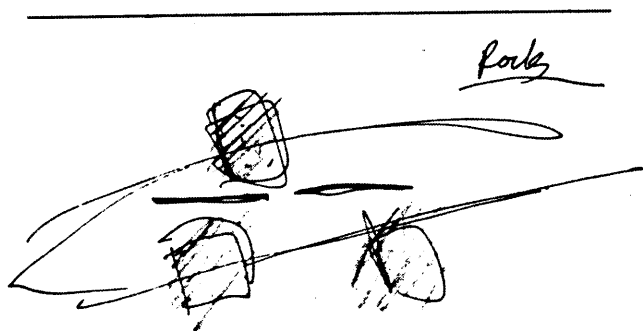
Sketch plan - registration



Sketch of Library in park

Aerial View





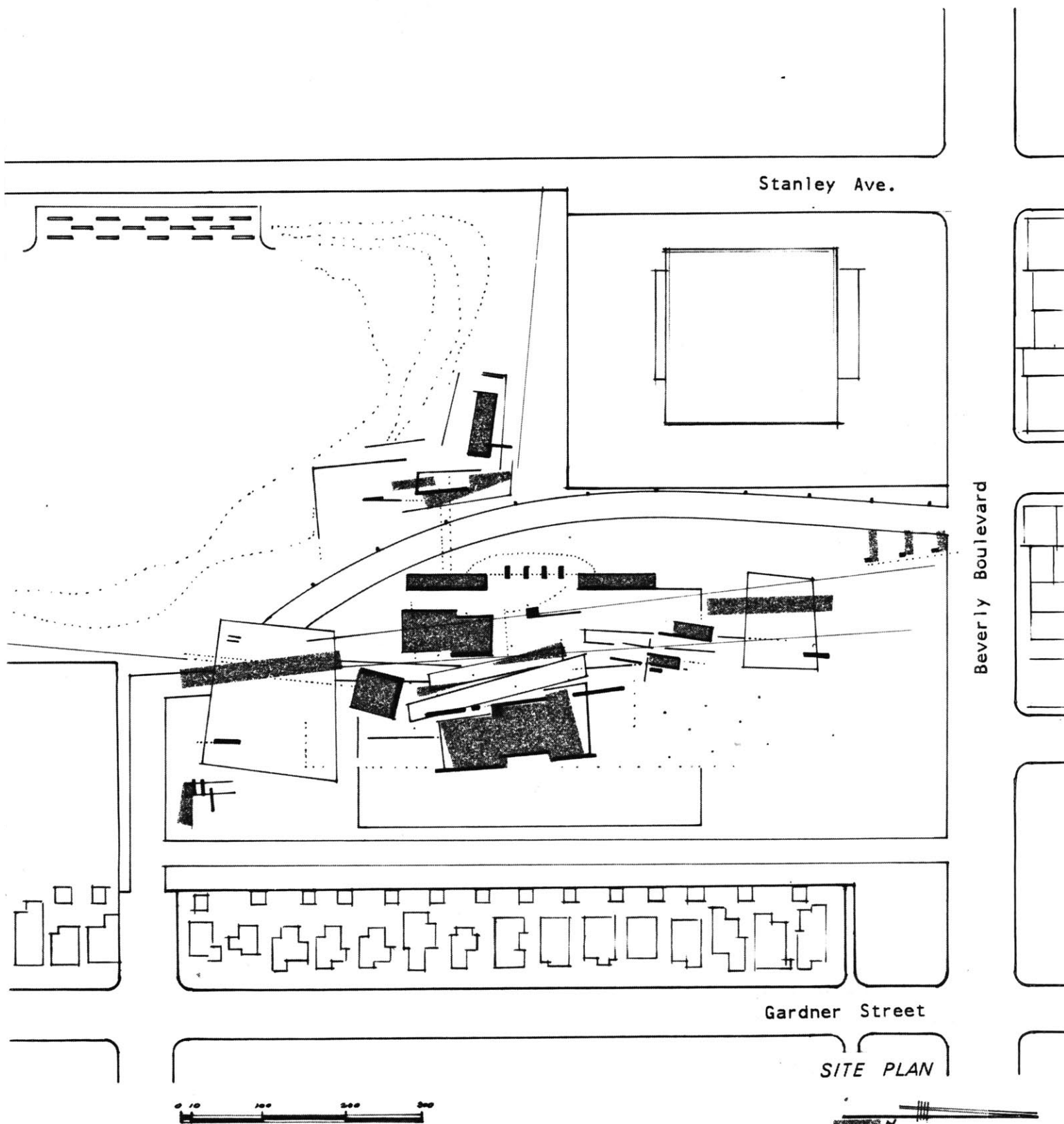
Scharoun - Darmstadt school

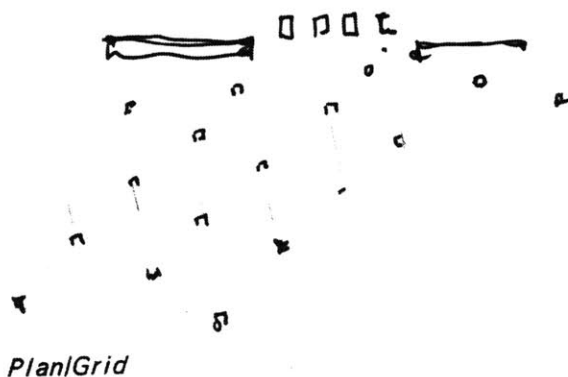
Miraculously the city's extremes include an excessive tolerance. Partly this is that indifference which is Los Angeles's most publicised vice, but it is also a heritage from the extraordinary cultural mixture with which the city began.

Reyner Banham

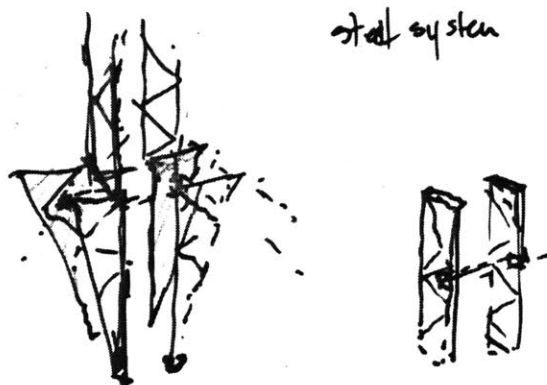
sequences of parts one experiences and the time one perceives as they move through the space. It is therefore necessary to respond to the scale of the city with large moves understood from above, in an airplane or be clear as one travels down Beverly Boulevard, a major connector in the city. Several site size moves have been made in this design to address this concern. The location of the separate buildings, that is to say the theatres, the archive and the administration are a field organization or 'rocks in the sand.' The pieces are clustered, the large and primary circulation moves between them. The pieces or 'rocks' are built enclosures or privacies, the circulation or 'sand' is the continuity of the unbuilt territories. The three built areas may be seen as a whole yet which also operate independently. Each area including the parking structures are 'rocks' where territories, circulation and activities happen both at a pedestrian and a vehicular scale.

In addition to the field organization of the activities, there is a shifted grid superimposed on the site reflecting the rhythm of the grid of the city. It takes





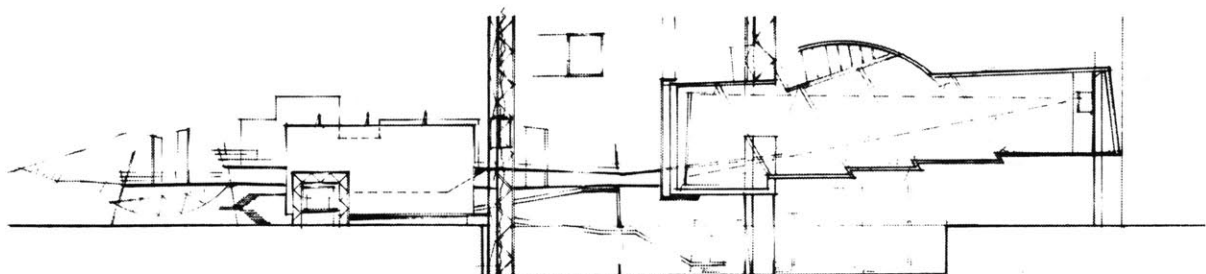
Plan/Grid



steel system

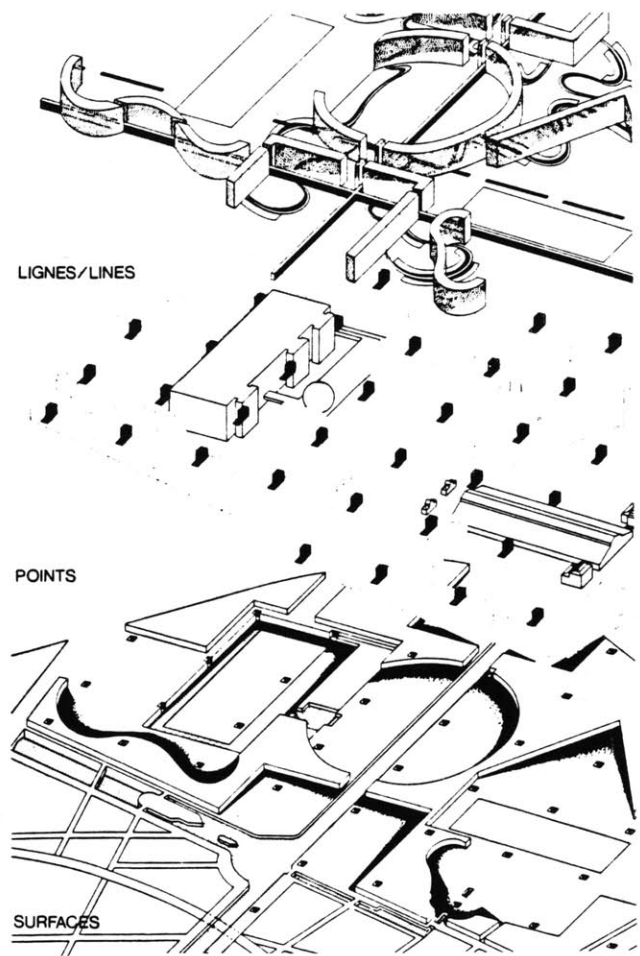
the repetitious grid, the physical presence of Los Angeles and permits the horizontal monumentality of the grid to exist and acknowledges it. It also acts as a dimensional stabilizer (in the randomness of the rest) to establish a regular rhythm. However, it also is used as the structural system for the theatres and exhibition area. The grids' dimensions stabilize the incontinuities in the Film Center by its repetition. The dimension is equivalent to the size of a facade piece (80') at its largest move and displaced in the same direction as the facade - the grid in the other direction makes a smaller move (40'). The structure, a steel frame system, is the most vertical element on this horizontal site. Additional site size moves include the

Early Section



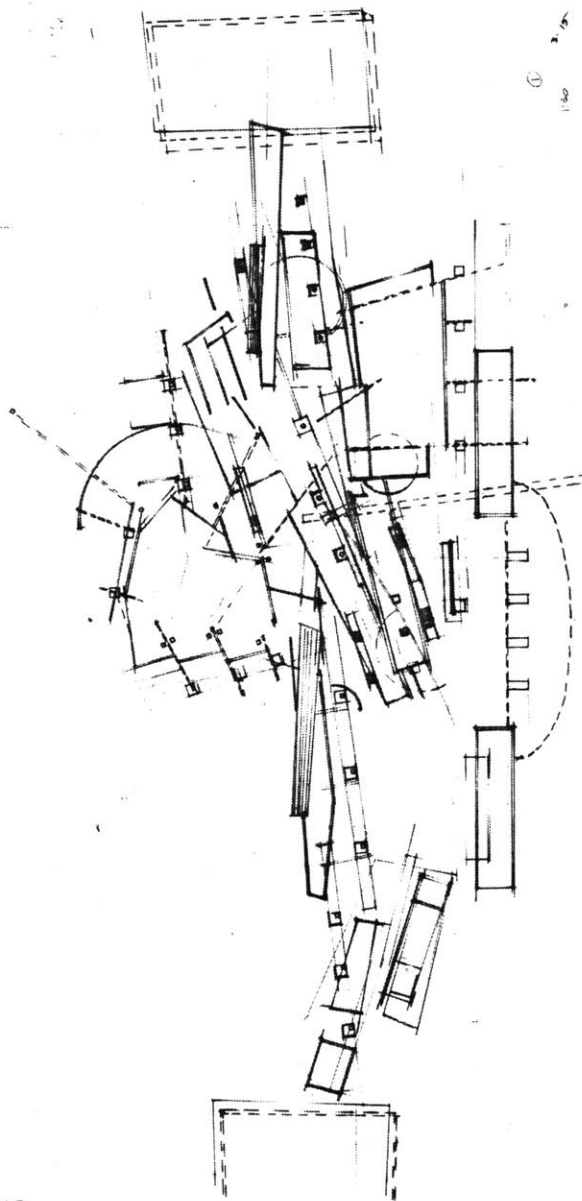
archive/library set in the hill below the main facade and establish the garden walls, terraces and other landscape moves. These elements help to make a kind of microcosm of Los Angeles.

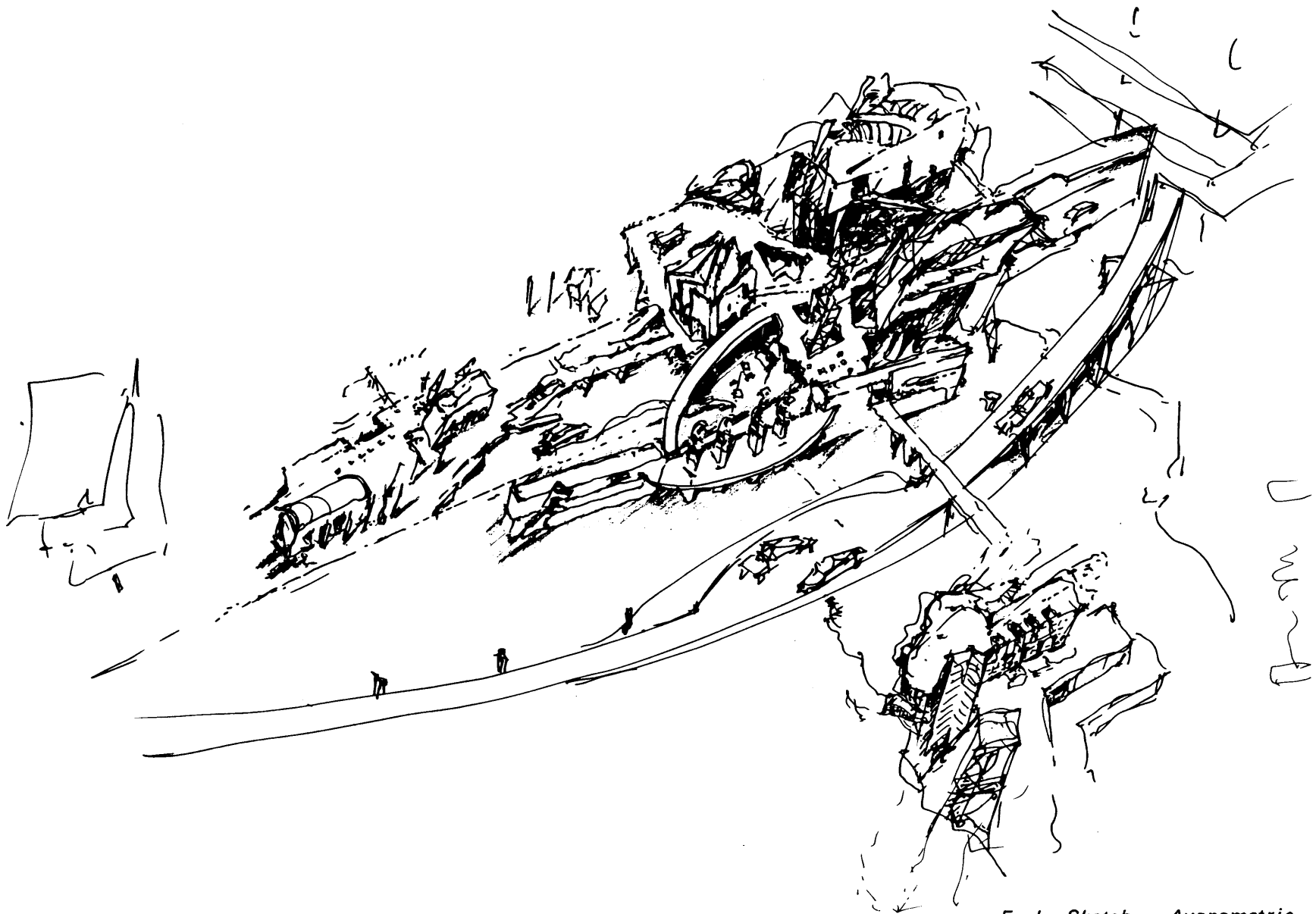
In Bernard Tschumi's competition entry for The Parc de la Villette - An Urban Parc for the 21st Century in Paris - he sets up the park with three different, independent systems. There are objects, points of activities organized on a grid, lines for the movement of circulation and roads to and from activities, and surfaces for the large open spaces and public activities. This sets up on a larger scale, a system like the Film Center where many options of movement can occur. I like the notion that the Villette is being designed for the 21st century - an optimistic attitude for the perpetuation of activity in the city.



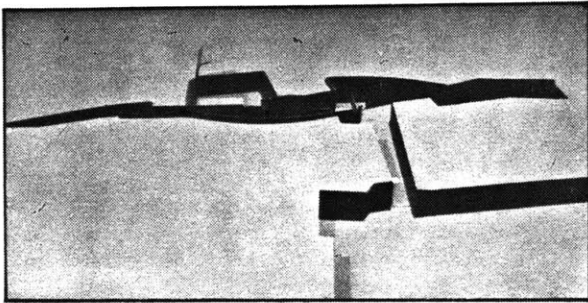
Bernard Tschumi - Parc de la Villette

Sketch plan - early scheme





Early Sketch - Axonometric



Model - ground

8.3 Horizontal Movement

The next organizational characteristic of the design occurs at horizontal levels, but layered in a vertical way. In the city of Los Angeles the movement happens in a linear manner; the city is discovered by moving along its streets in automobiles. With the Film Center one moves in from the street - Beverly Boulevard - then may either move along the ramp to the parking structure or drop off visitors in front of the columns, the main entrance.

There is a series of data or horizontal registration levels which organize the Film Center. As one enters through the existing columns, the continuum of the city, one remains on the ground. The park drops

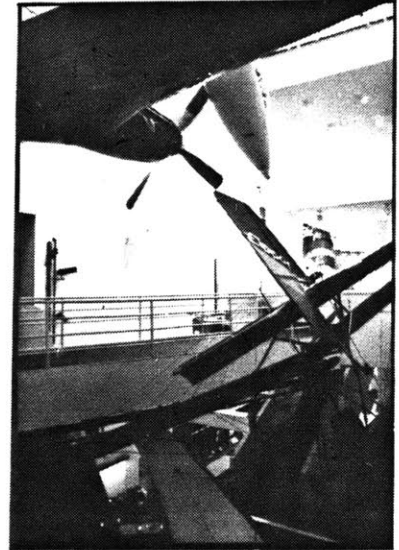
off in the front of the building where the study center exists. This particular structure is faces south and is about 15' below the street. Across from the library/archive is a flood control water break which appears to have punched a hole in the ground. The same thing happens on the opposite side of the hill where the library establishes a level that continues into the ground out from the park and into the theatre area. This lowest level is for the technical support systems, mechanical facilities and includes one smaller theatre and restrooms. It is a molded form carved out from the earth. Car circulation can happen at the lowest level, but is limited to the services of the building. For example books and films received in the administration can be moved to the library on this level.

Immediately upon entering from the street level there is a grand stair and escalators to take the visitor up to the main level. The main level is established mostly because I want the circulation to occur in the space but also at the level of the general commercial strip which runs along most of the main streets in Los Angeles, about 15'. This is the primary circulation

where exhibitions, entrances to theatres, bars, the cafe occur, generally the most public. As in Frank Gehry's Areospace Museum, the circulation is among the displays and in the air. The exhibition area becomes coupled with several functions including the display of the visual expositions, the entrances to the theatres and multi moving image lab as well as an open theatre itself. The space enlarges so that screening can occur with in the open territory. I will return to this area but first must finish the horizontal description.

So far the levels include the park level and basement, the street level, and the major circulation above the ground. Finally there is the level which registers the accumulation of these parts, the walkways above all the activities. This is the most elevated level, suspended from the structural columns so that one may understand the continuities, dislocations within the territories of the film center. From here any type of three dimensional image and illusion can be suspended and displayed. At this height one may also view the city and its many lights at night.

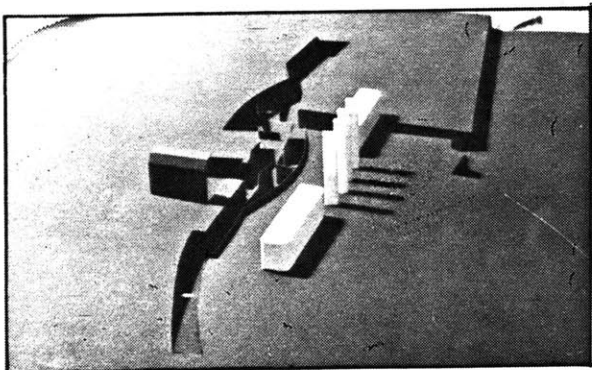
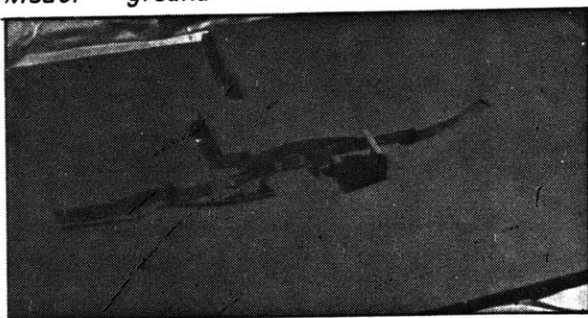
Areospace Museum - Gehry

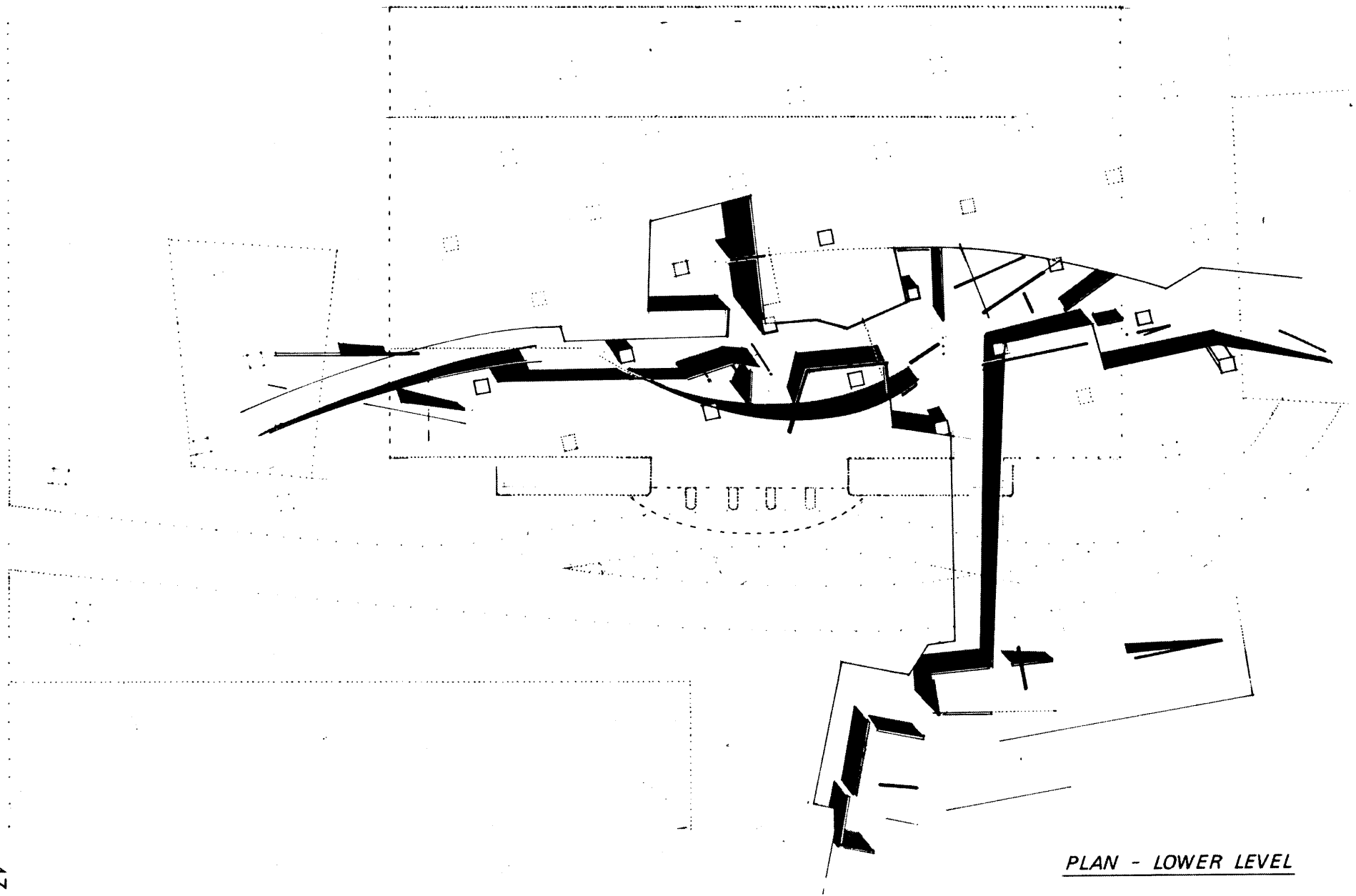


'skywalk'



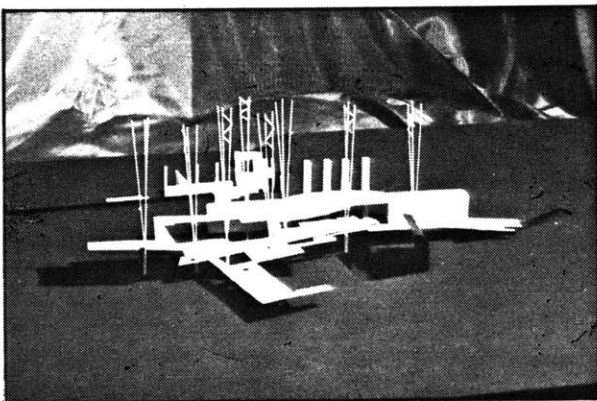
Model - ground

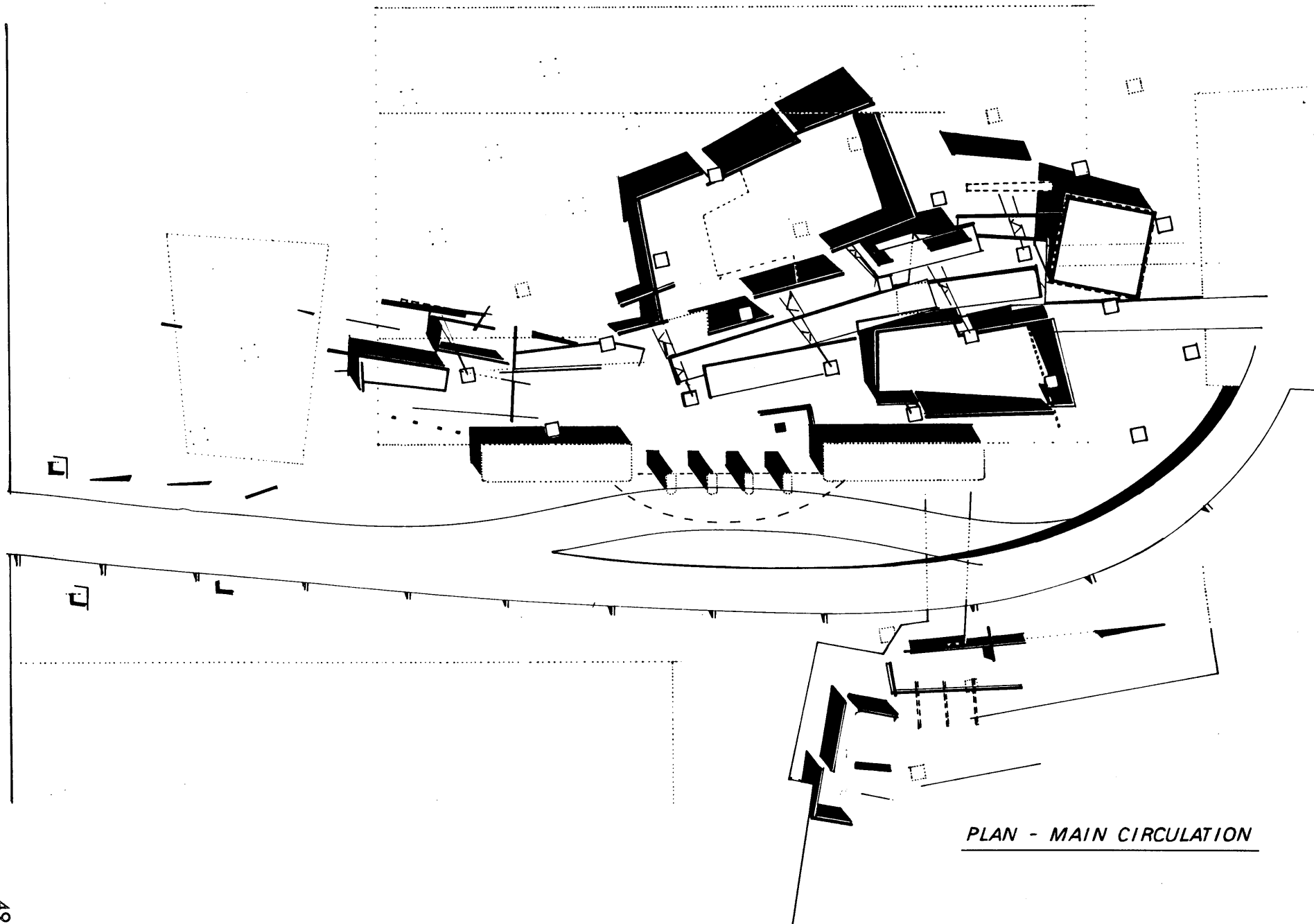




PLAN - LOWER LEVEL

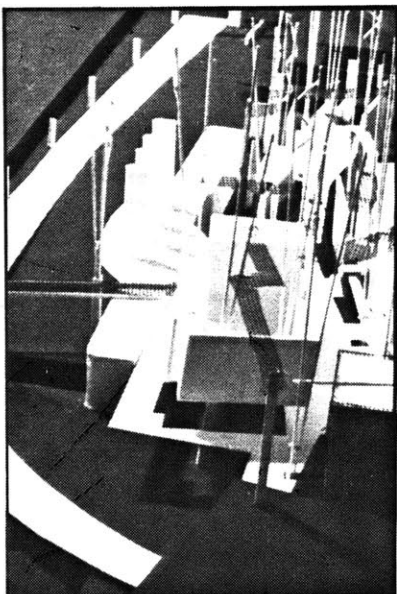
Model- circulation level

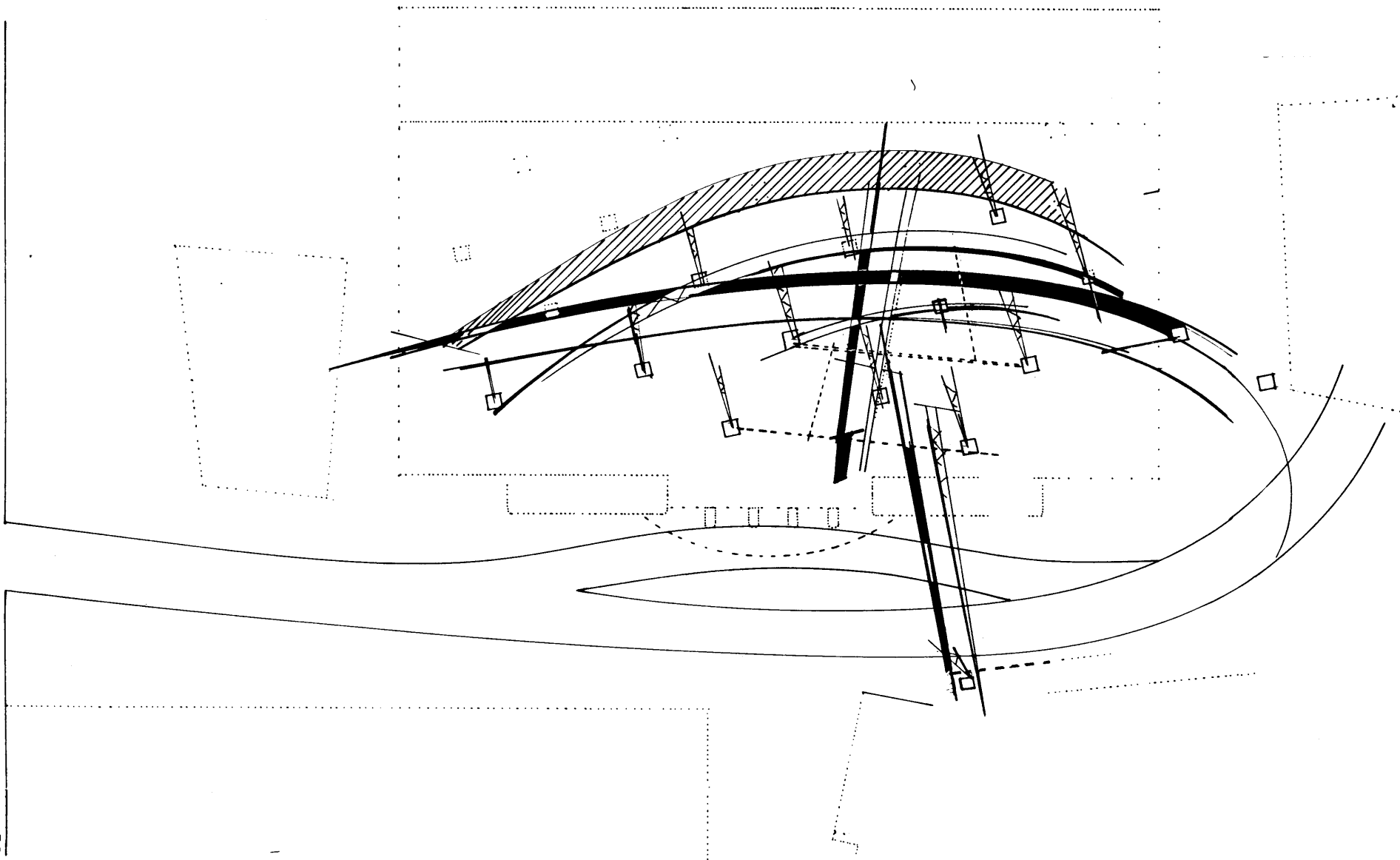




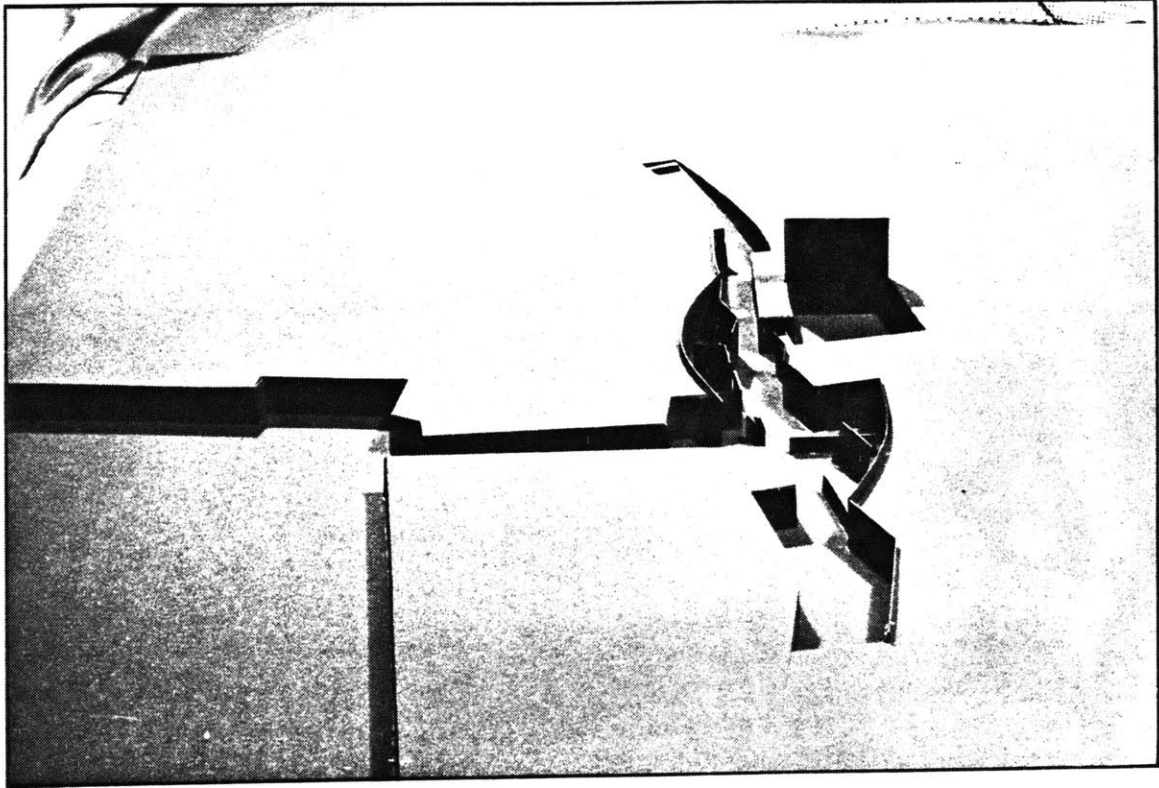
PLAN - MAIN CIRCULATION

Model- detail

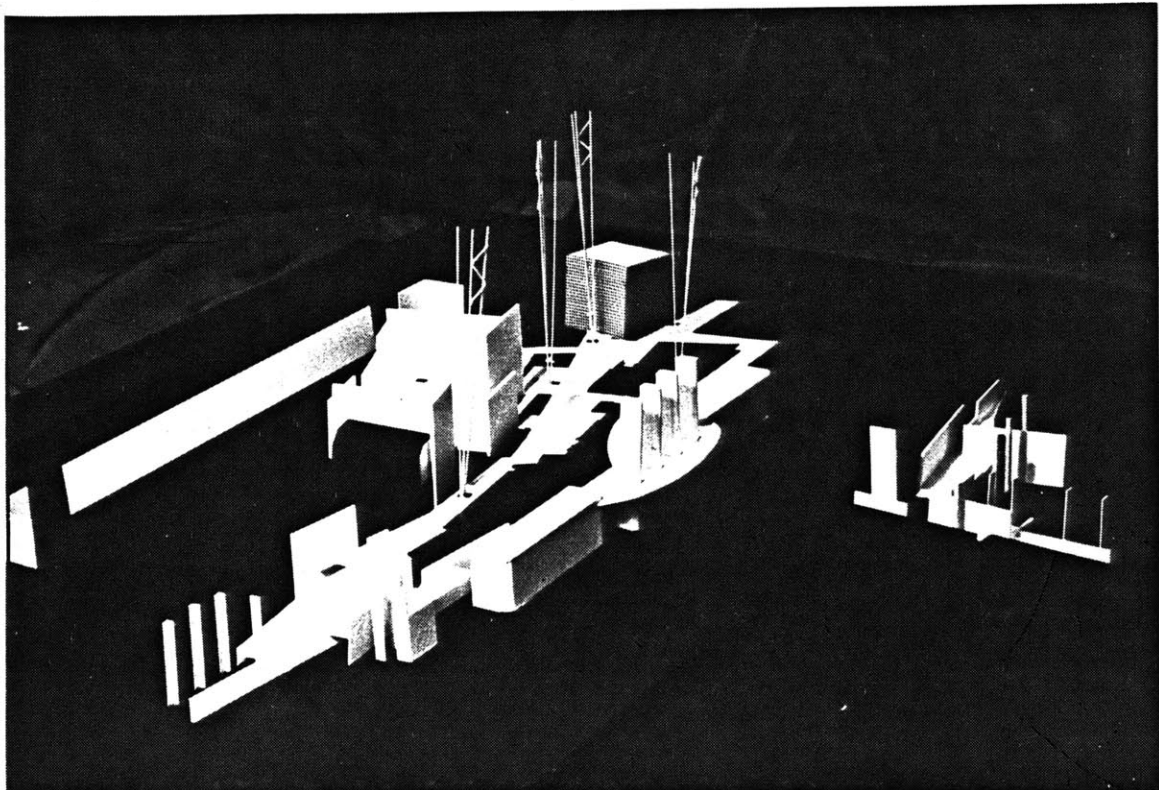


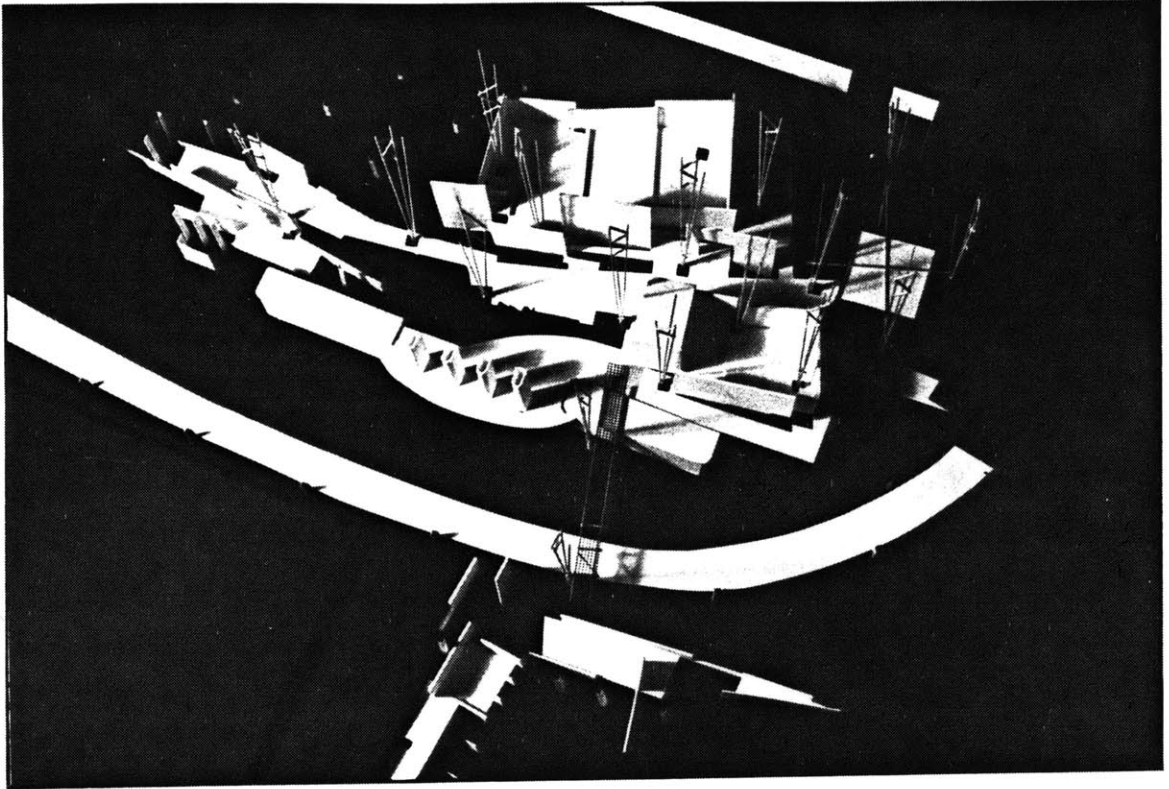


PLAN - SKY/ROOF WALKS

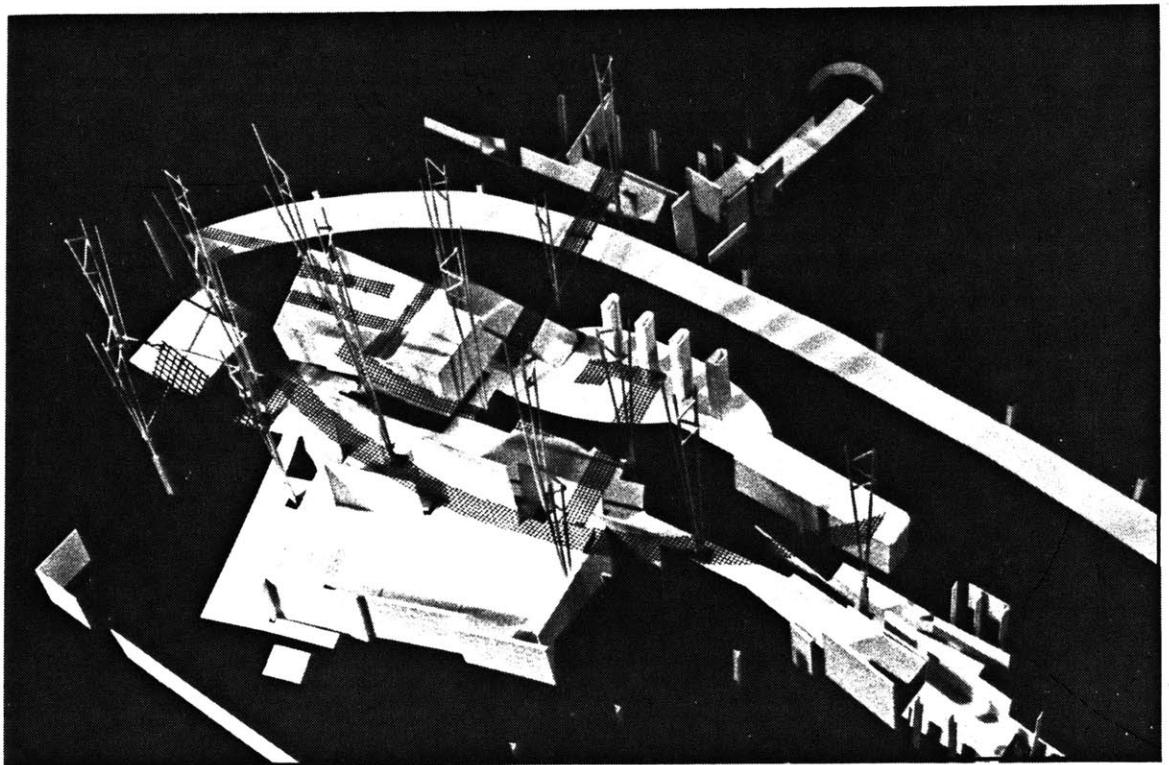


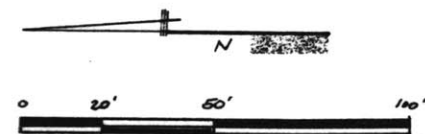
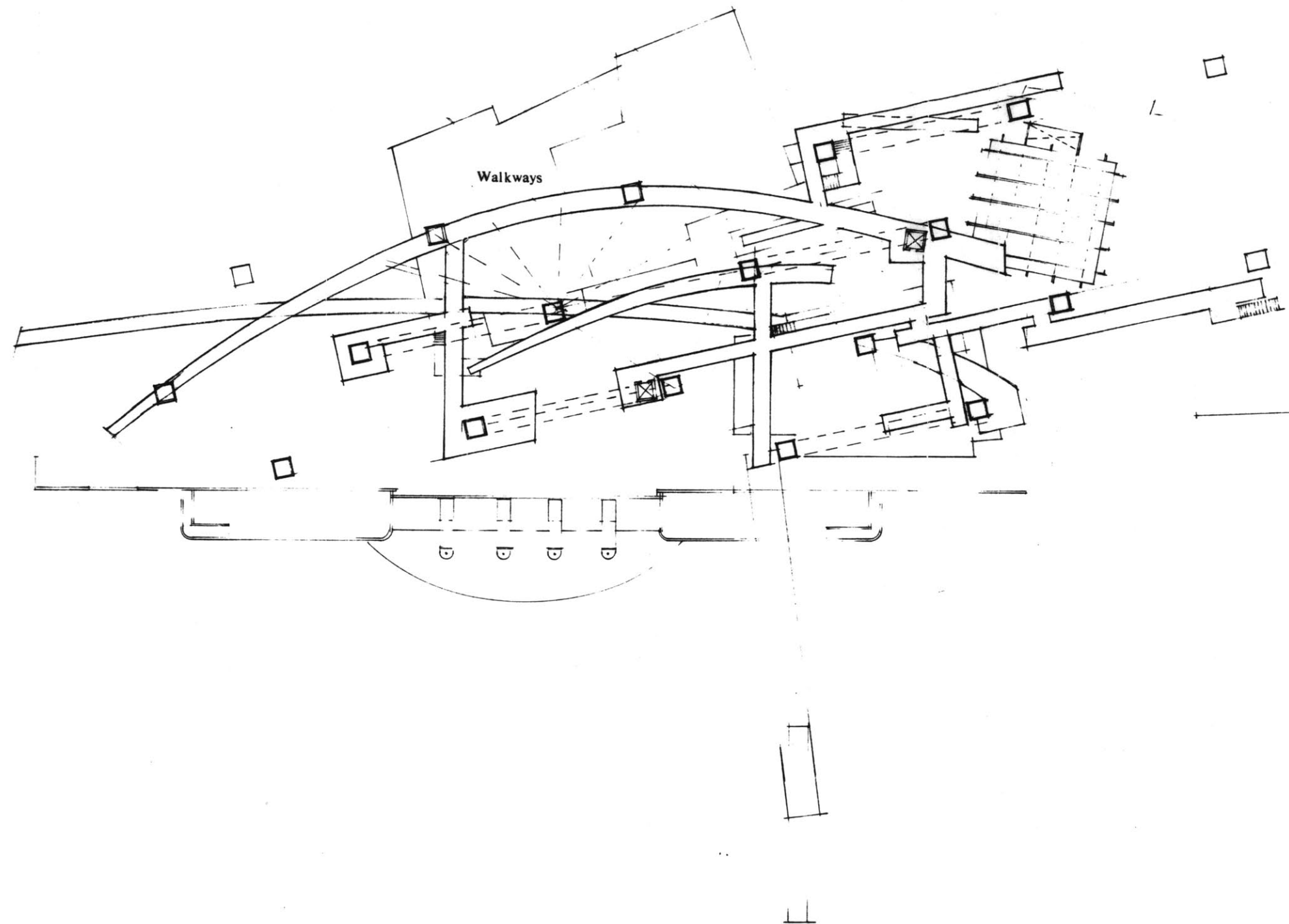
Model

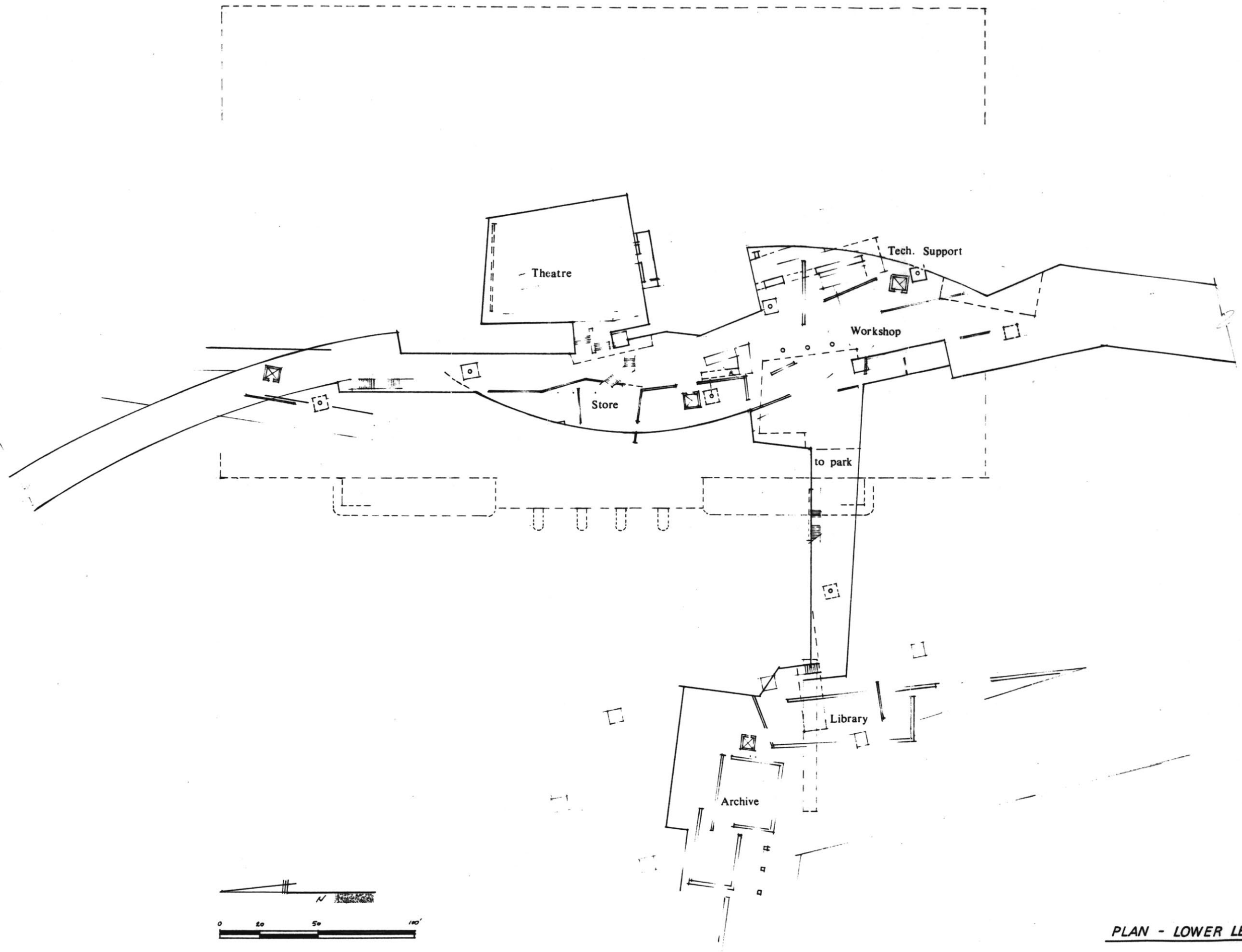


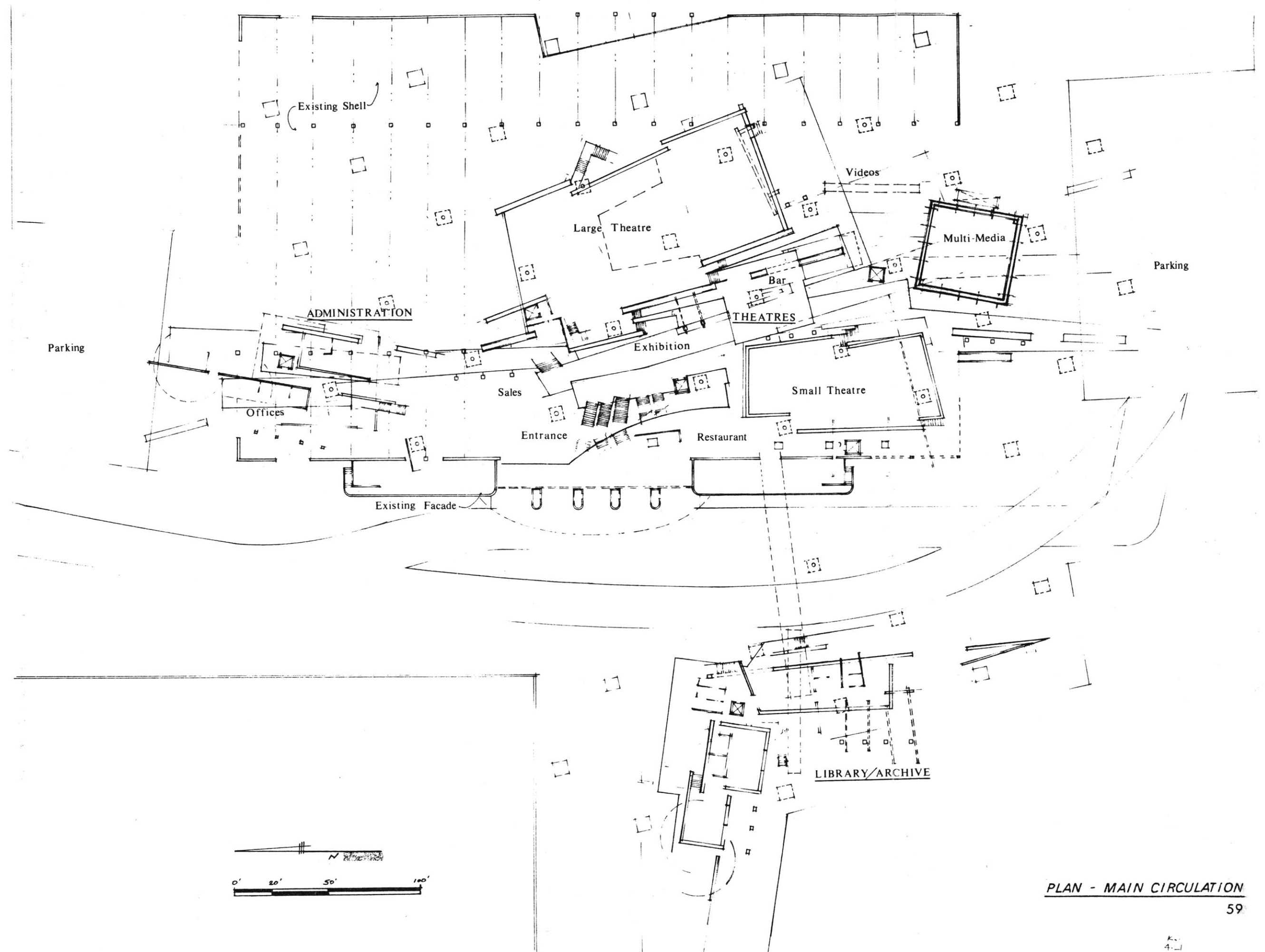


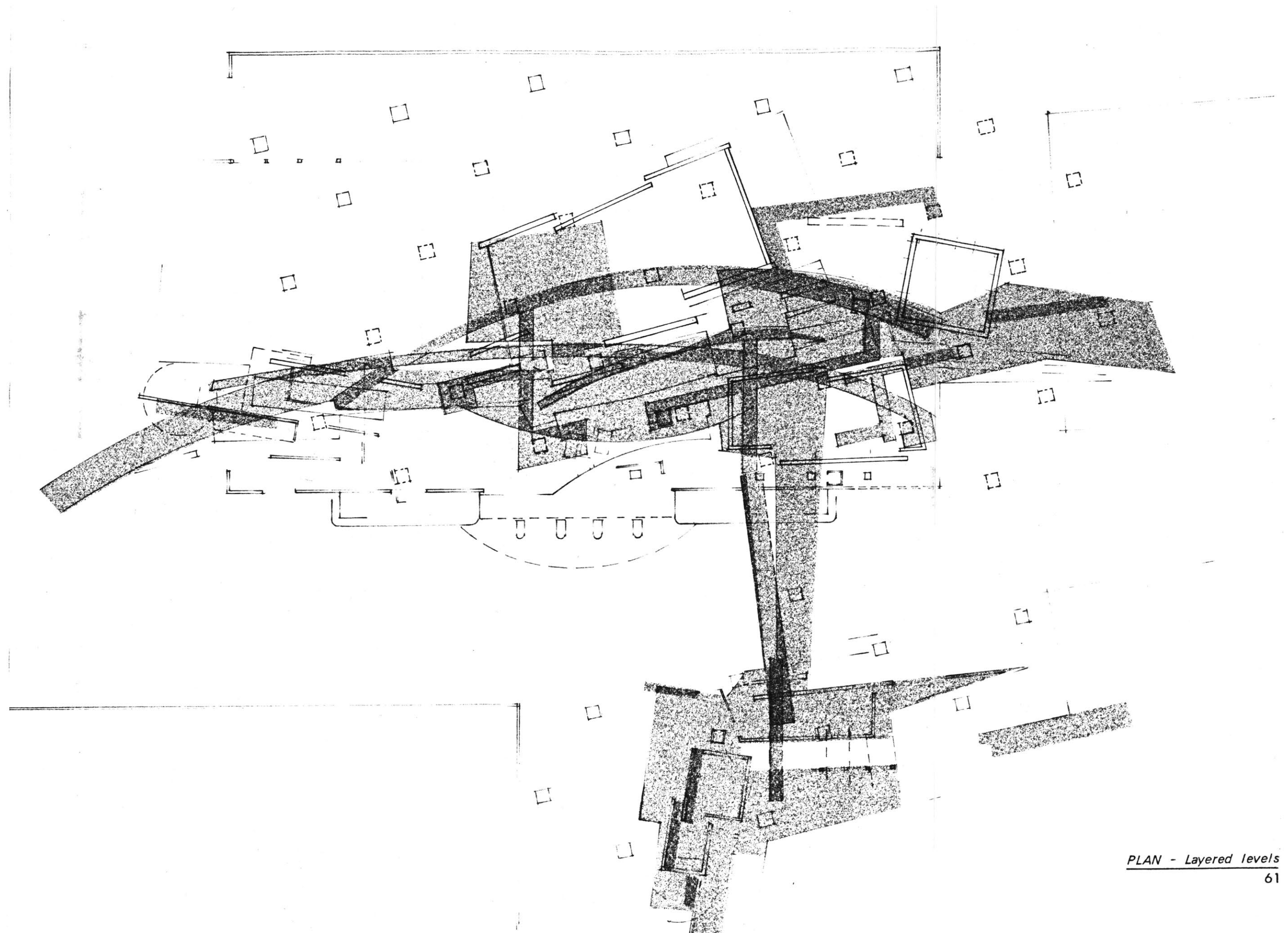
Model

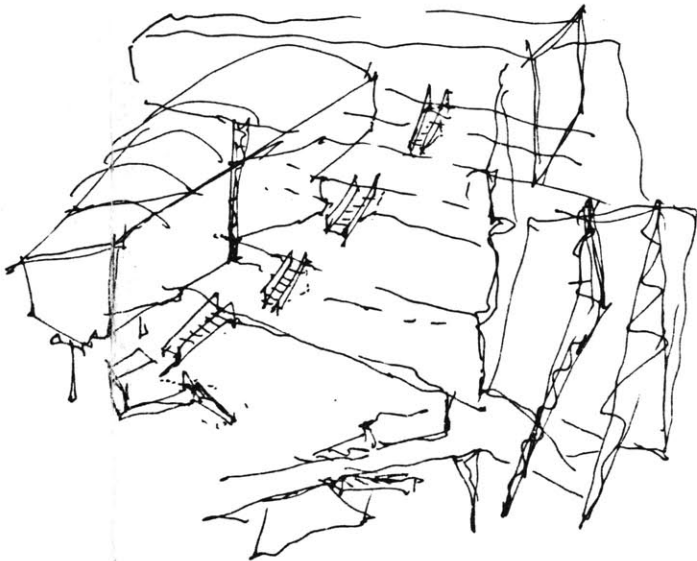






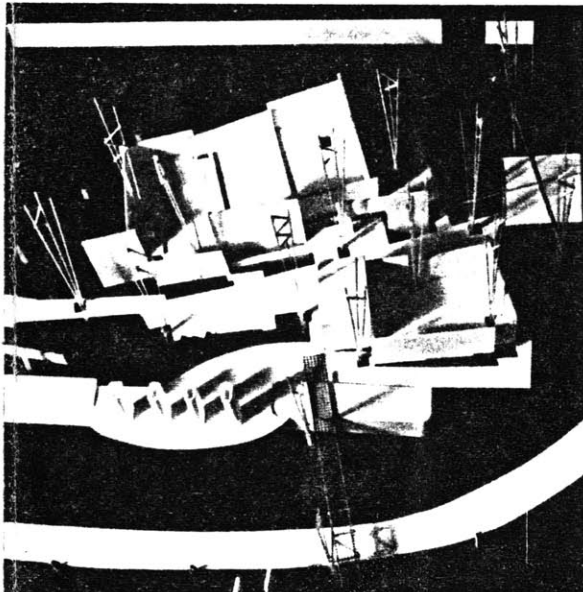






Early sketch

Model - Theatre area

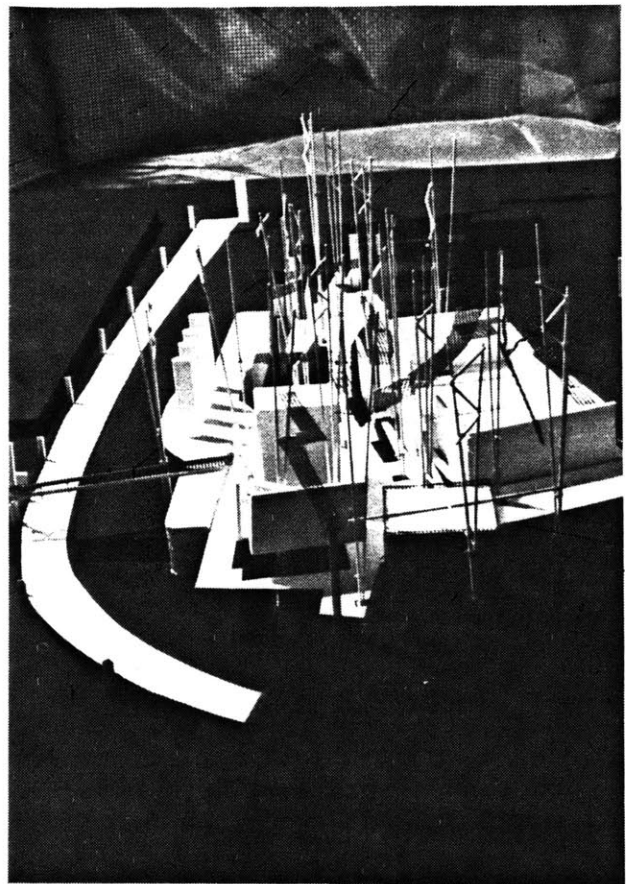


8.4 The Theatres

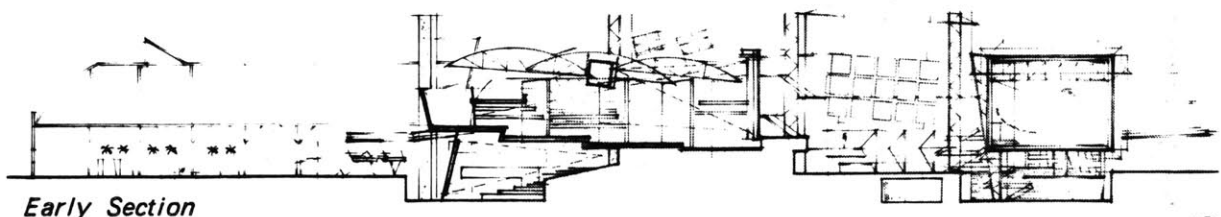
I will now be more specific about the theatre area. In the design I wanted to maintain the continual layering and simultaneity and synchronicity of events in function and in meaning. Reality in film is what the viewer decides to admit as being real or realistic as opposed to illusion or unreality. Objective visual events will have more subjective responses and interpretation. What is taken literally is relevant only to the perceiver. Formally the theatres are arranged in a similar manner to the overall scale of the site: a field organization through which the circulation and access occur. There are two theatres across from each other, the multi-media lab is towards the farthest end. To reinforce the adaptability of the space, options are set up for the visitor both to view and to perceive. Each visit may provide a new experience or at least set of images for the viewers. Not only are the options for the movement important, but the movement through the space and the objects displayed - in this case the theatres or exhibitions are critical. The theatres are floating and suspended

from the structure so that the established datum is questioned. That is to say that one is moving not only through the air with space below, but the theatres themselves appear to be in an unstable position. In reality each piece is a structurally self stable "box" supported by the large steel structure, the continuous and repetitive element across the site.

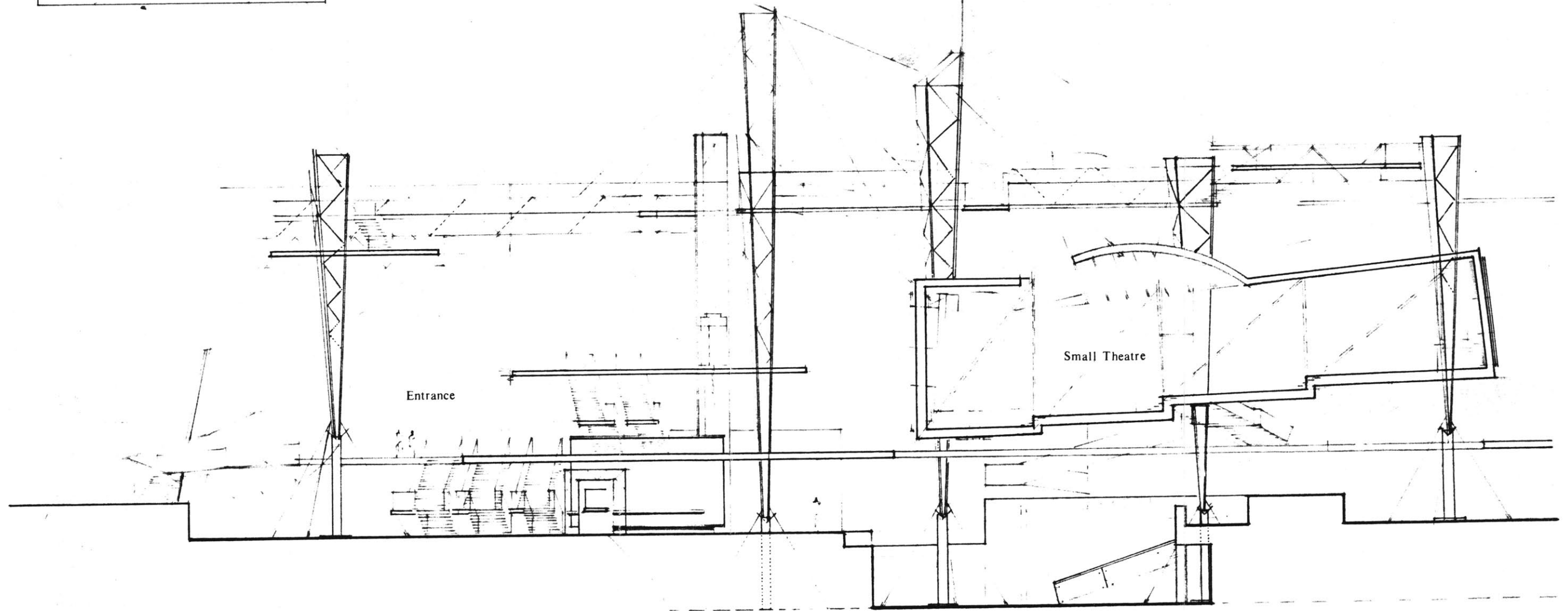
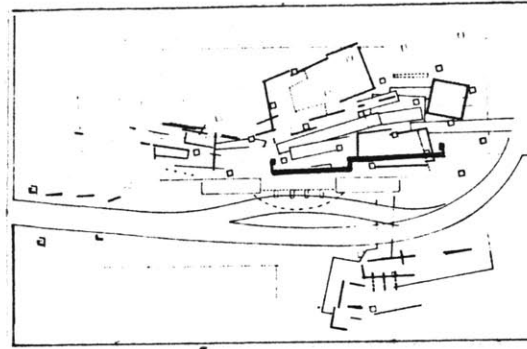
Because the structure establishes a rigid dimensional organization, the 'objects' and circulation, although reinforcing the direction established by the west facade are in tension with each other. The space is fluid but the movement for the visitor is perhaps disjointed and broken up with the visual interventions and displays—the conflict with what is real and what is perceived.



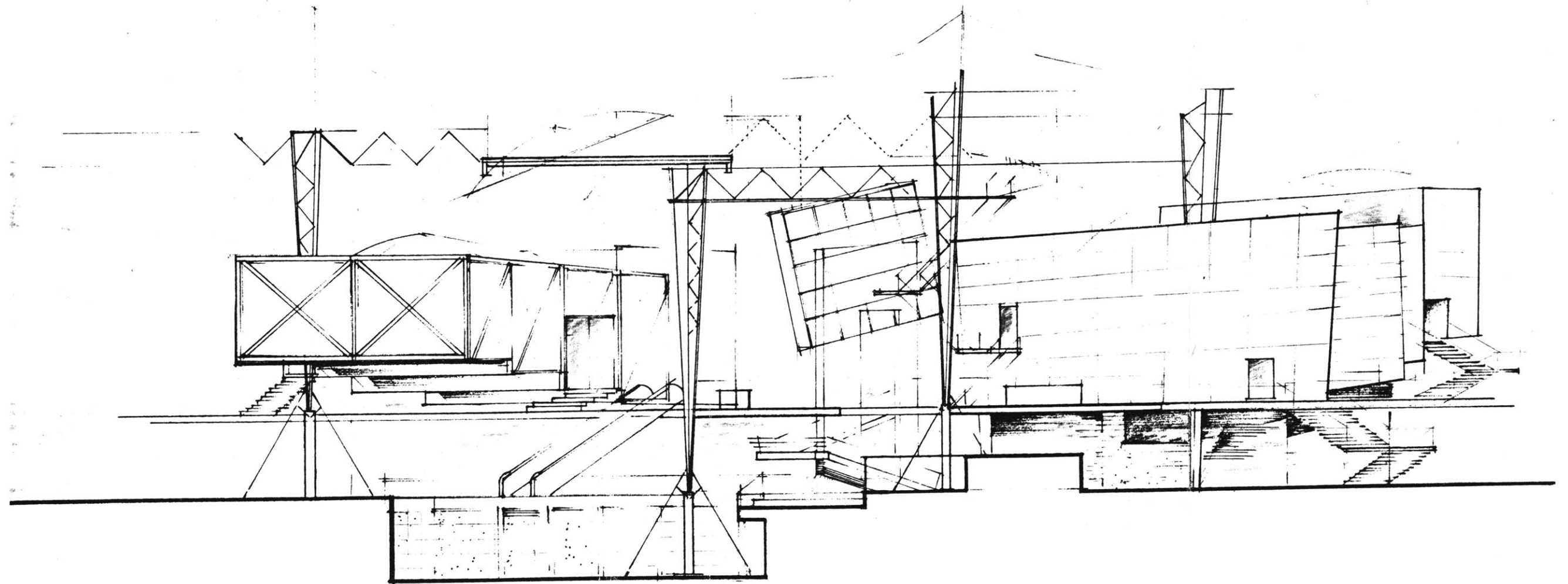
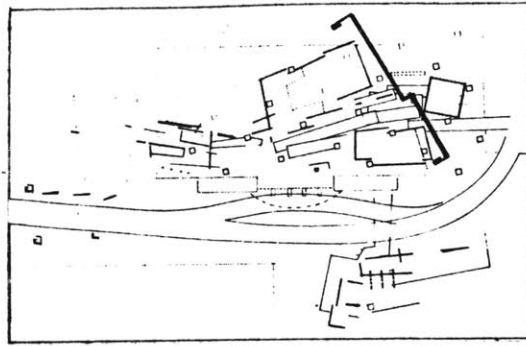
Model - View North



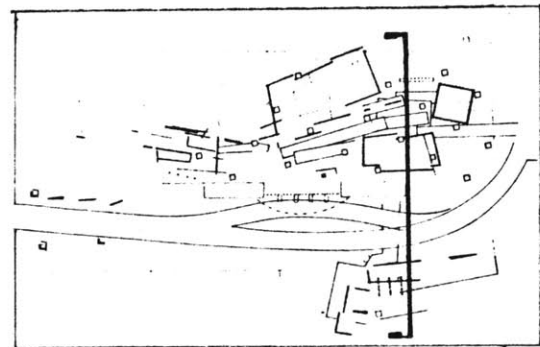
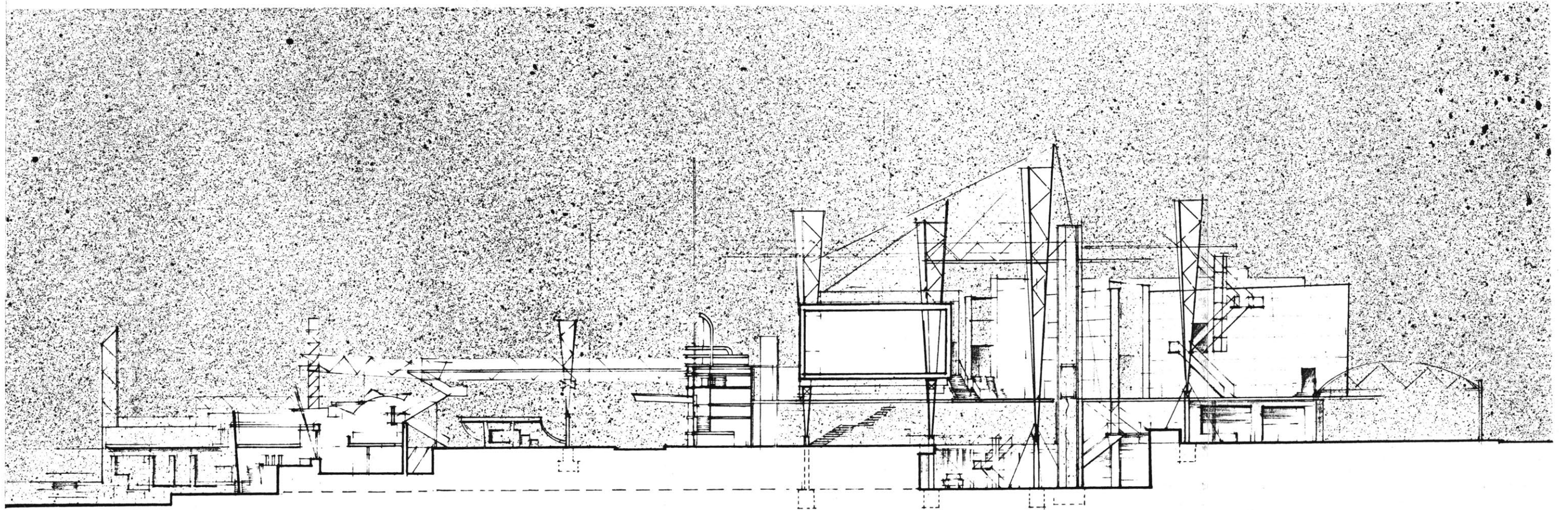
Early Section



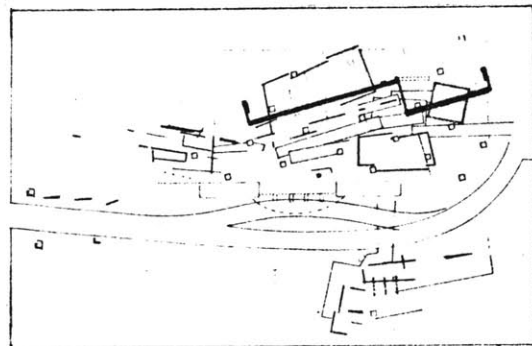
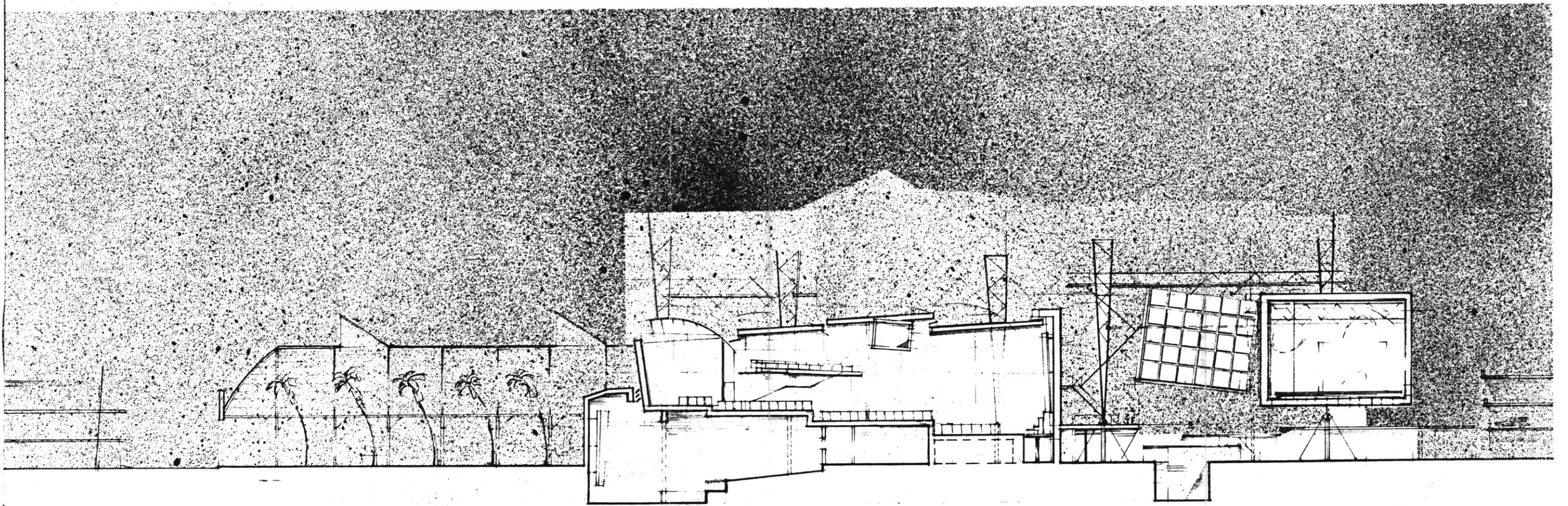
SECTION 1:20 through small theatre



SECTION 1:20



SECTION - through library and theatre area



SECTION - through large theatre and multi-media image lab

8.5 Frame and Collage

The irony with films is that although there is an infinite possibility of things that can happen, the images are confined to a frame. Although one is able to move a camera forward, backward, pan a setting, zoom or recede the action, it is contained within the limitations of the frame. An archive or library stores the films in compartments and classifies them on shelves



'Swingtime' - Montage
(photo by Mary Meagher)

I have passionately hoped that some picture would remain out of its frame, I think it can even while it does not, even while it remains there.

Gertrude Stein

72

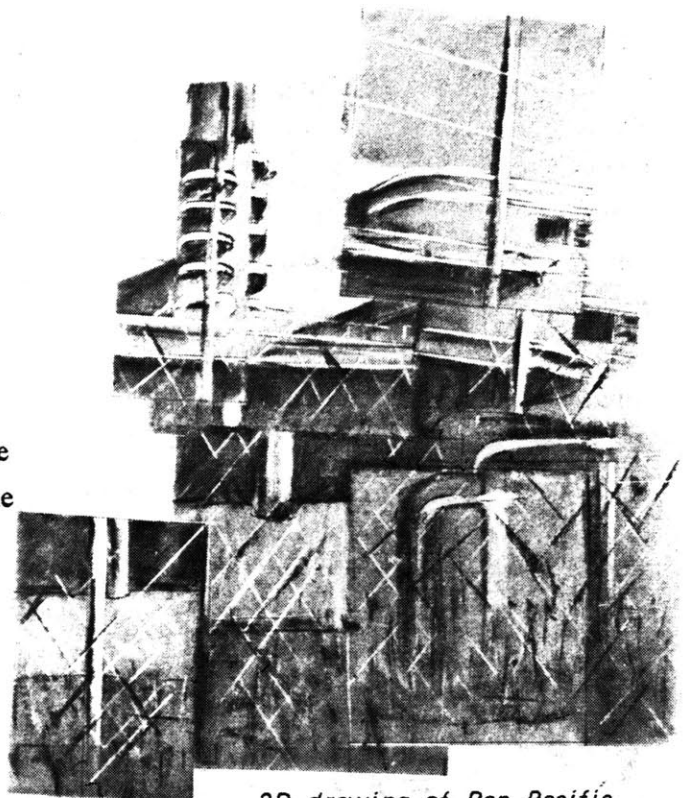
and when the film is shown it is projected onto a fixed screen, once again a series of frames. The frame in the motion picture is dependent on the sequence of time and of the images; it is "less independently workable than the word or sound" according to Sergei Eisenstein (Film Form pg. 5). Montage is imperative, therefore, within the framed image because it increases the richness of the forms: "the frame is more resistant than granite". With montage, the layering of images, setting apart elements which usually coincide, light, sound, tone, color help increase spatial perceptions in film. Italo Calvino's Mr Palomar also has difficulty with the frame: each time he tries to put a 10 x 10 frame on the ocean, the waves shift and floats so that the frame is in constant motion.

The hard thing is to fix the boundaries of this zone, because if, for example, he considers as the side farthest from him the outstanding line of an advancing wave, as the line approaches him and rises, it hides from his eyes everything behind it and thus the space under examination is overturned and at the same time crushed.¹

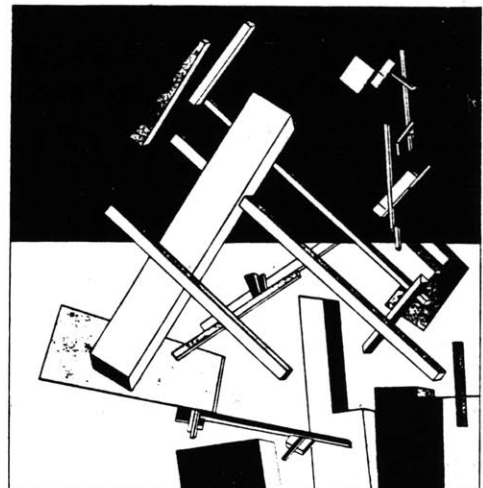
¹ Calvino, Italo, Mr. Palomar, pg. 6

Although the movement is repetitious, the waves change continuously. The characteristics of this space is the type of ambiguity of undefined edges that I would imagine in the Film Center.

In fact, the Film Center is a building I have trouble putting physical limits on. Because of the expanse of the city and the characteristics of it which change over time there is not a definite volume I can define. Although what occurs in the Film Center, the viewing of two dimensional images, the atmosphere of how one moves through it must not be static. El Lissitzki in his Proun Space for the Great Belin Exhibition in 1923 intended the space to be organized so the viewers engage in the space, become part of the exhibition not visually, but physically as well. So if one is to engage in the space with the objects and images then the definitions as to where the building stops and starts is unclear: "Space is divergent, time is sequential".¹ El Lissitzky's quote is



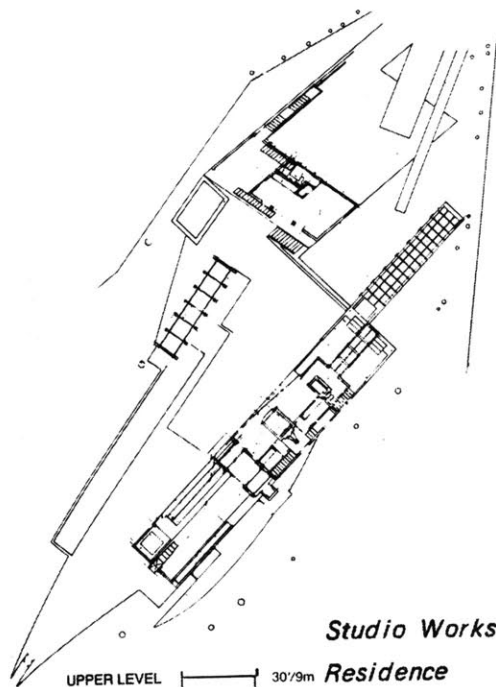
2D drawing of Pan Pacific



¹ Russia: An Architecture for World Revolution, pg. 147



Picasso-Violin and Grapes



Studio Works

Residence

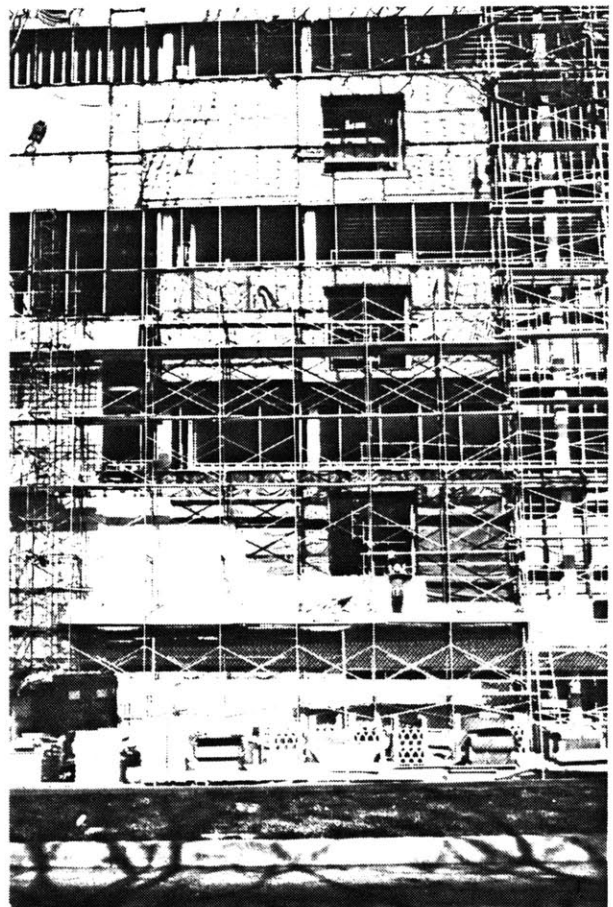
applicable to film, I think, in the same manner as Eisenstein saw its potential. Film is indeed the leading twentieth century art form now expanded into video and media.

If the frame confines images, the montage is a way to liberate this in film, but in space, the collage becomes totally disassociated from the frame. The collage is another twentieth century art form begun by the cubists who took objects they painted on the canvas and moved them around to alter perceptions in perspective with light, form and movement. The collage permits an object not only to be put into relationship and conflict with other objects, but can be manipulated into three dimensions away from the surface or frame. In Los Angeles, architects like Frank Gehry, Morphosis, Frederick Fisher, Studio Works express in their architecture methods of a collagist approach by colliding forms and materials together in built forms: there is a causalness in the architecture similar to that of artists and art in Los Angeles. Many associations can be made to various works in Los Angeles to early 20th Century movements like

Suprematism, Constructivism in the sense that there is a desire to 'invent' different forms in a building scale. Frederick Fisher writes:

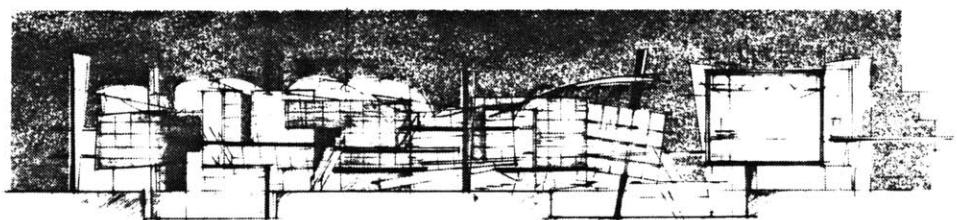
Collage as a means of composition reiterates the notion of displacement and indexes time through the layering of objects. The world is seen not as homogeneous, but as an array of discrete pieces that may be independently manipulated

The collagist attitude of setting forms together in a three dimensional system, has been an interest of mine in this design. The Film Center has been organized not only in a linear fashion, with the movement through the forms, but also in a vertical layering of space and activities which can be either associated or not with others.

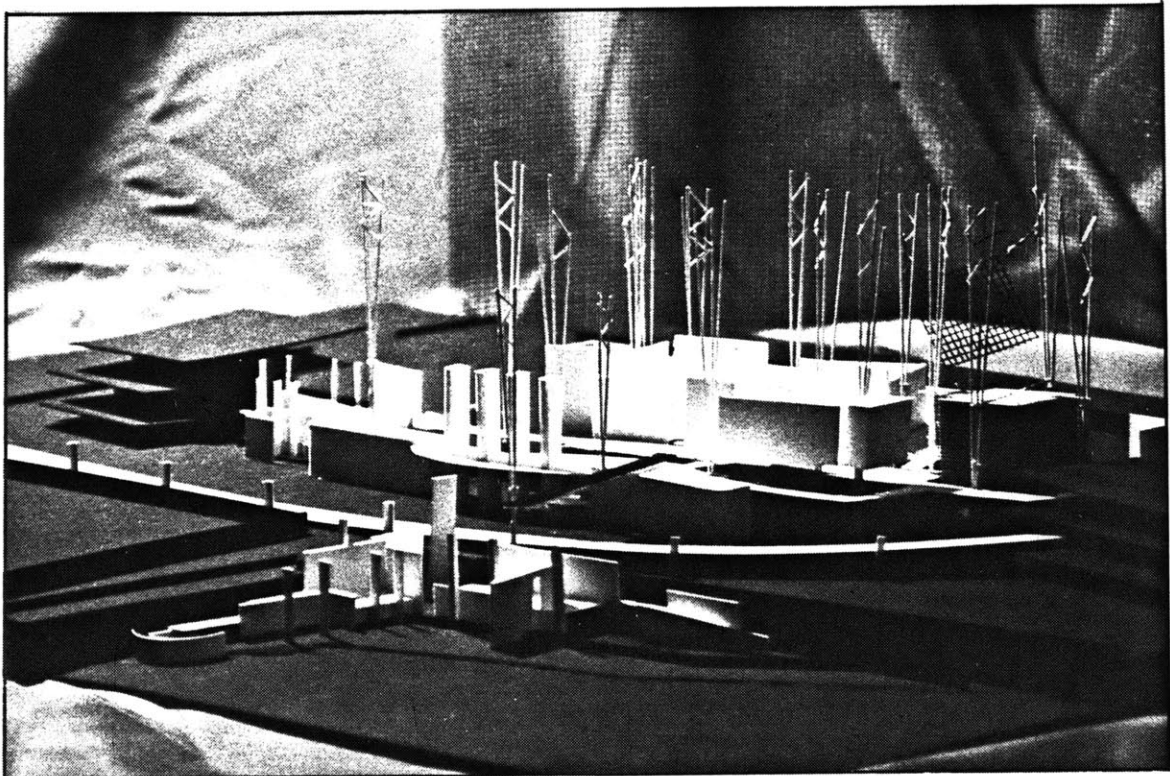


L.A. County Museum - Construction of Addition

Elevation Sketch



Model



8.6 Materials

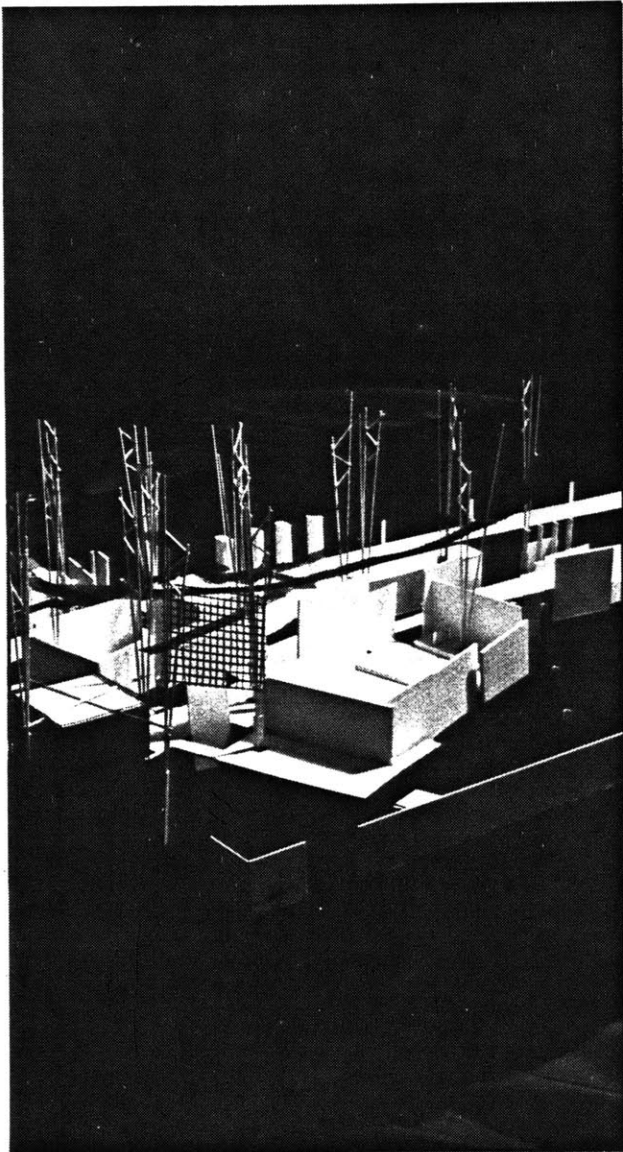
The use of materials in the Los Angeles Film Center vary depending on form, space and use. The existing facade is made of simple wood frame construction - see existing plan and section - the finish material is stucco. The existing shell, also wood frame is roofed with prefabricated arch ribbed wooden trusses.

The facade will remain stucco but the materials will change once inside the Film Center. Primary materials include:

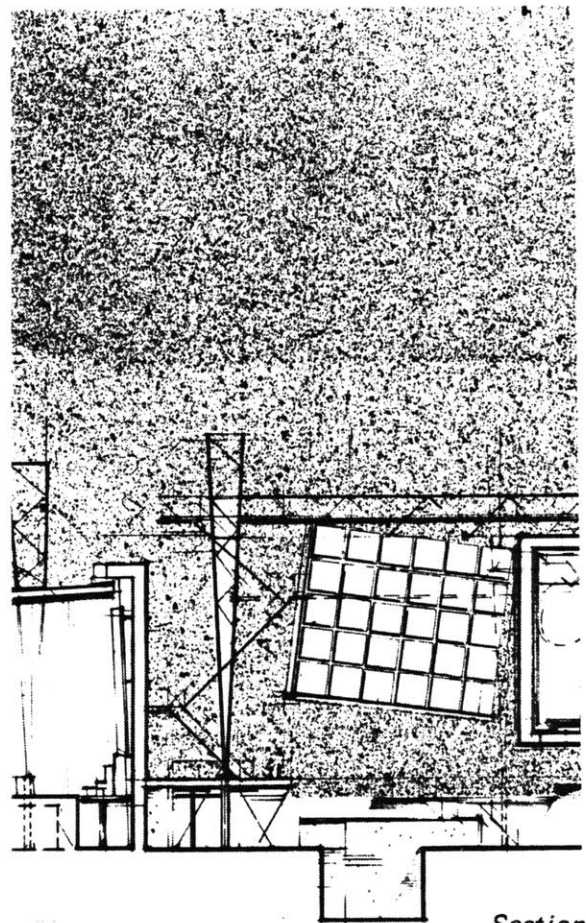
- large steel frame for the towers and sky walks*
- Metal panels - enamel glaze on the theatres (see sections)*
- Cross braced steel on small theatre (see sections)*
- limestone block and concrete block for the lowest level and library/archive wall construction, ground and paving.*
- metal and canvas roofs*
- wrapped metal sheathing on enclosures*
- glass closure*

The intention in use of the materials is to make the parts of the film center separate and independent from each other. The materials will be juxtaposed and set against each other, yet maintain continuities over the site. The limestone and concrete block at the ground and lower level takes the tradition of the heavy walled construction of the adobe (usually stucco in L.A.) as a local material and forms the earth. It begins in the park, below the street and leads into the theatre area and forms a 'base' in the theatre area. The exchange of materials happens at the ground level where the stone forms a foundation for the large theatre and platforms for exhibitions.

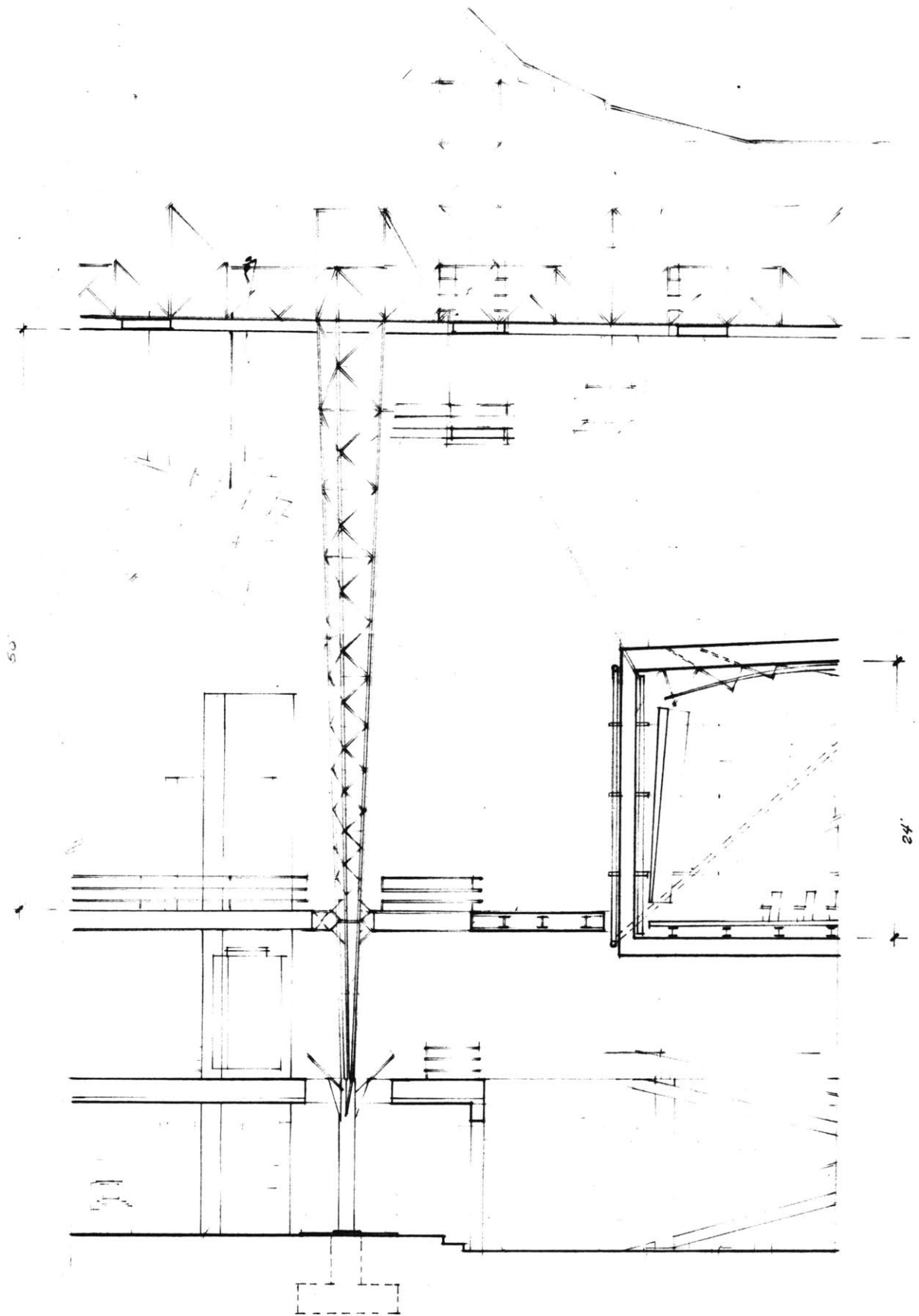
The steel towers, catwalks, stairs, handrails move down into the lower level. They contrast with its heavy construction. Above, in the sky walks the steel is light and materials are translucent - the canvas and screens. Ambient light is permitted to enter the public area where visual displays and videos will be projected. The remainder of the existing roof will be glazed over so that the light is everywhere - the landscape is permitted to enter around the built territories.



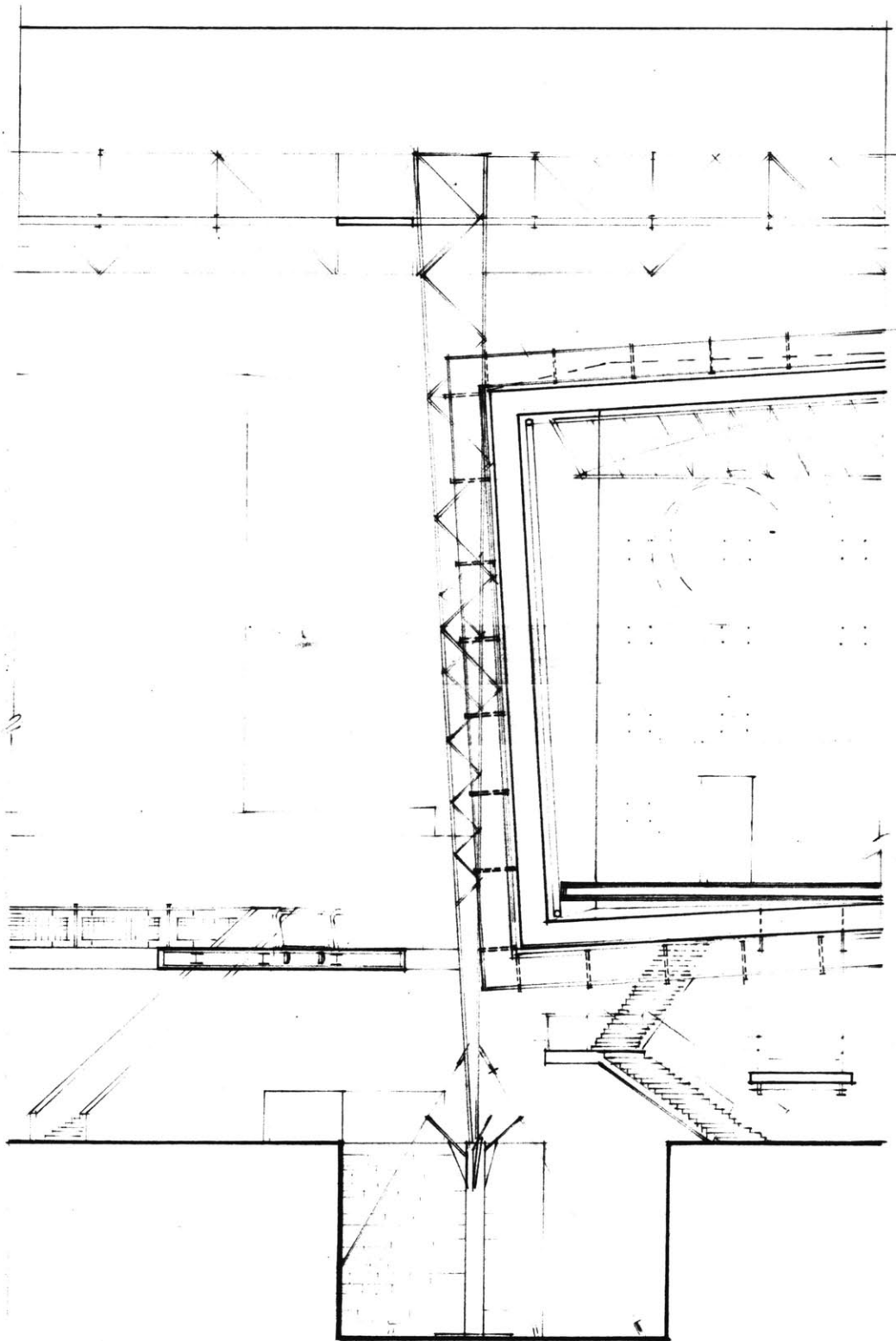
Model



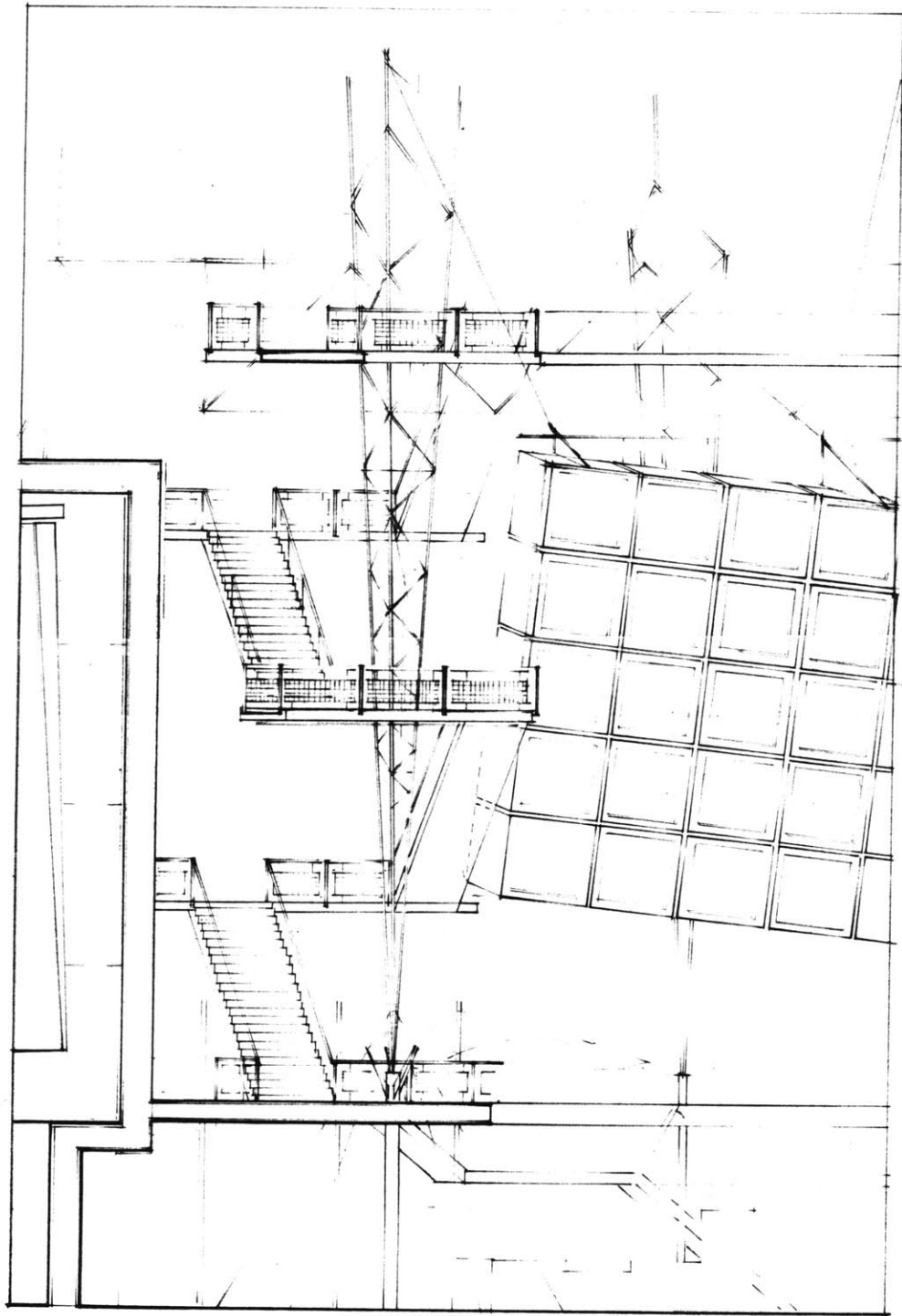
Section



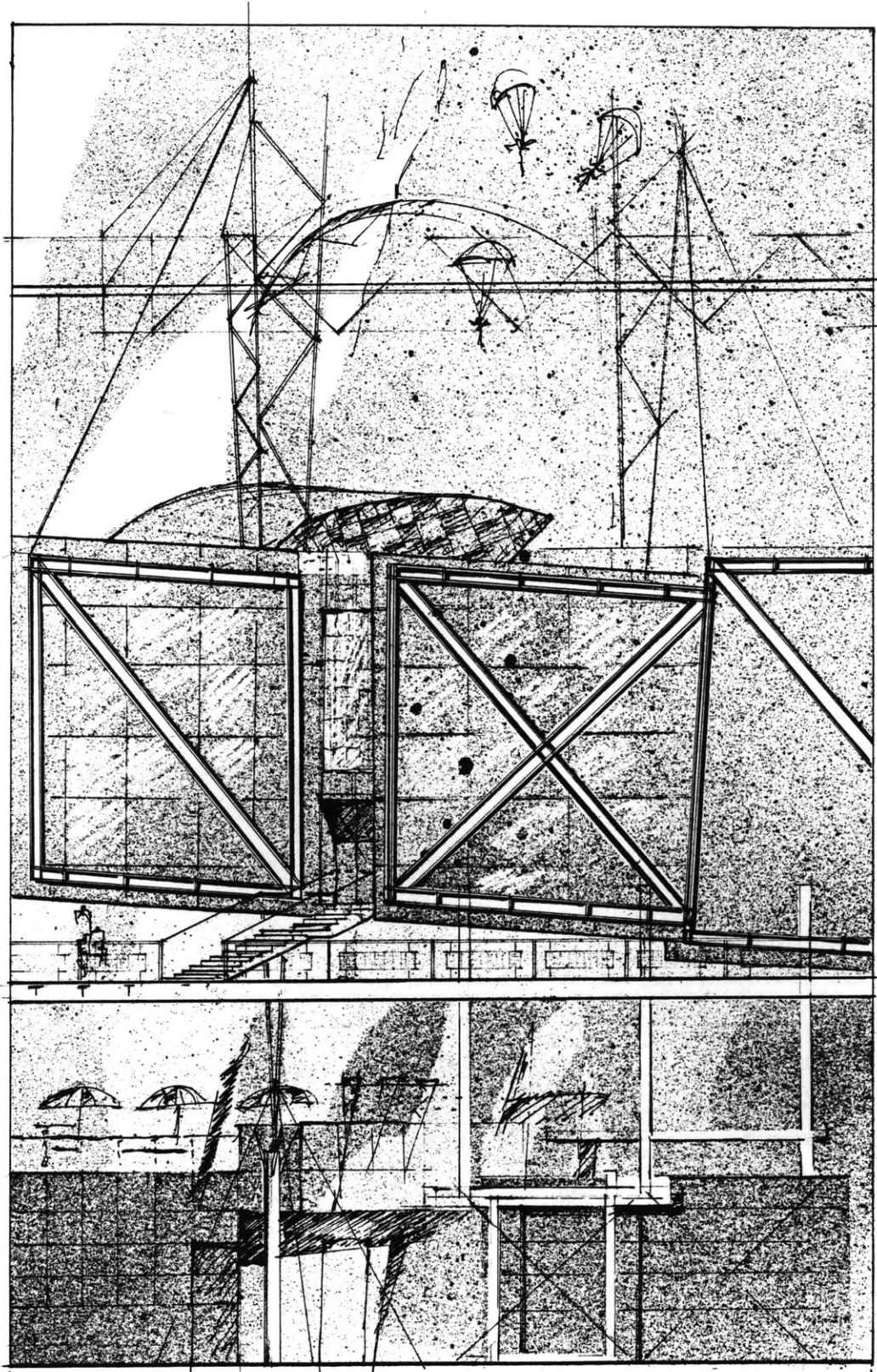
Section through glass elevator and small theatre near the entrance



Section through the Multi Media Lab and the walkway from the parking lot

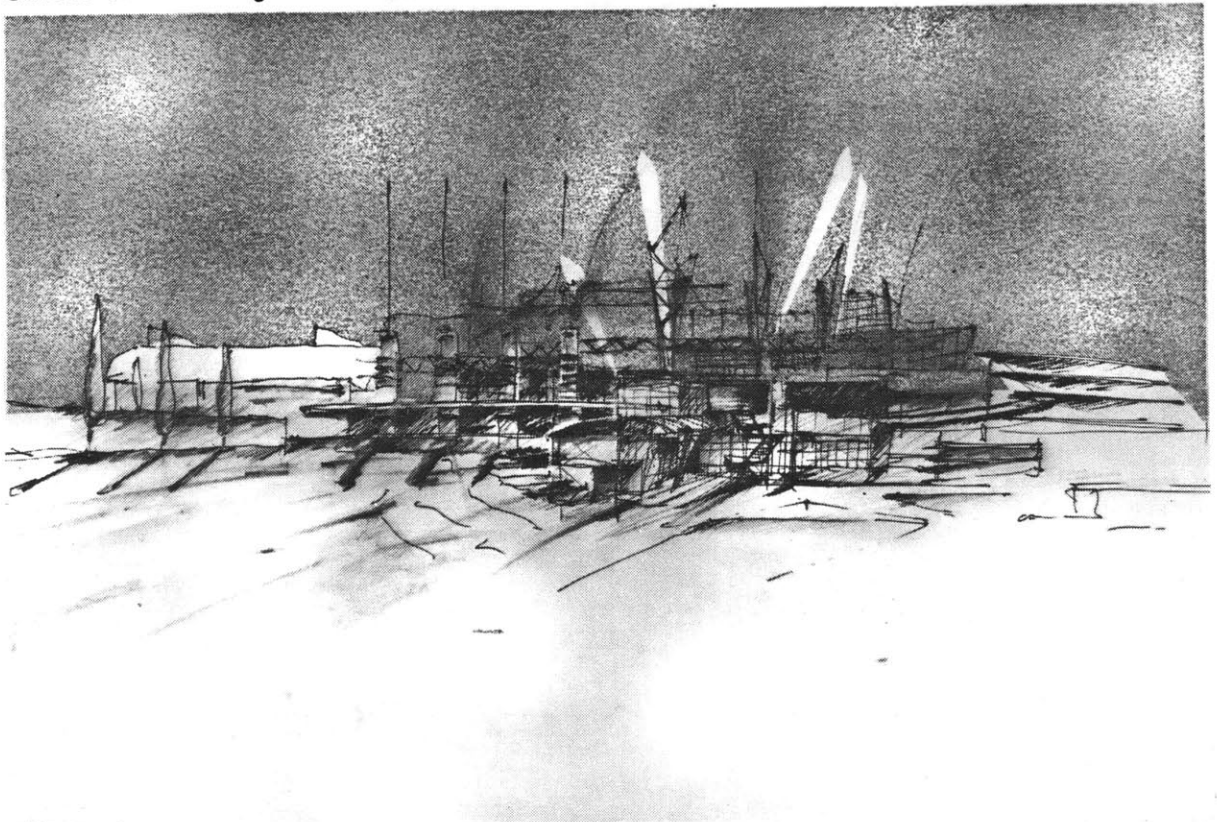


Section through large auditorium to suspended video screens and stair



Section through main circulation level looking at entrance to the small theatre.

Sketch of Building from Park



9. Conclusion

A model is by definition that in which nothing that has to be changed, that which works perfectly: whereas reality, as we see clearly, does not work and constantly falls to pieces; so we must force it, more or less roughly, to assume the form of the model.

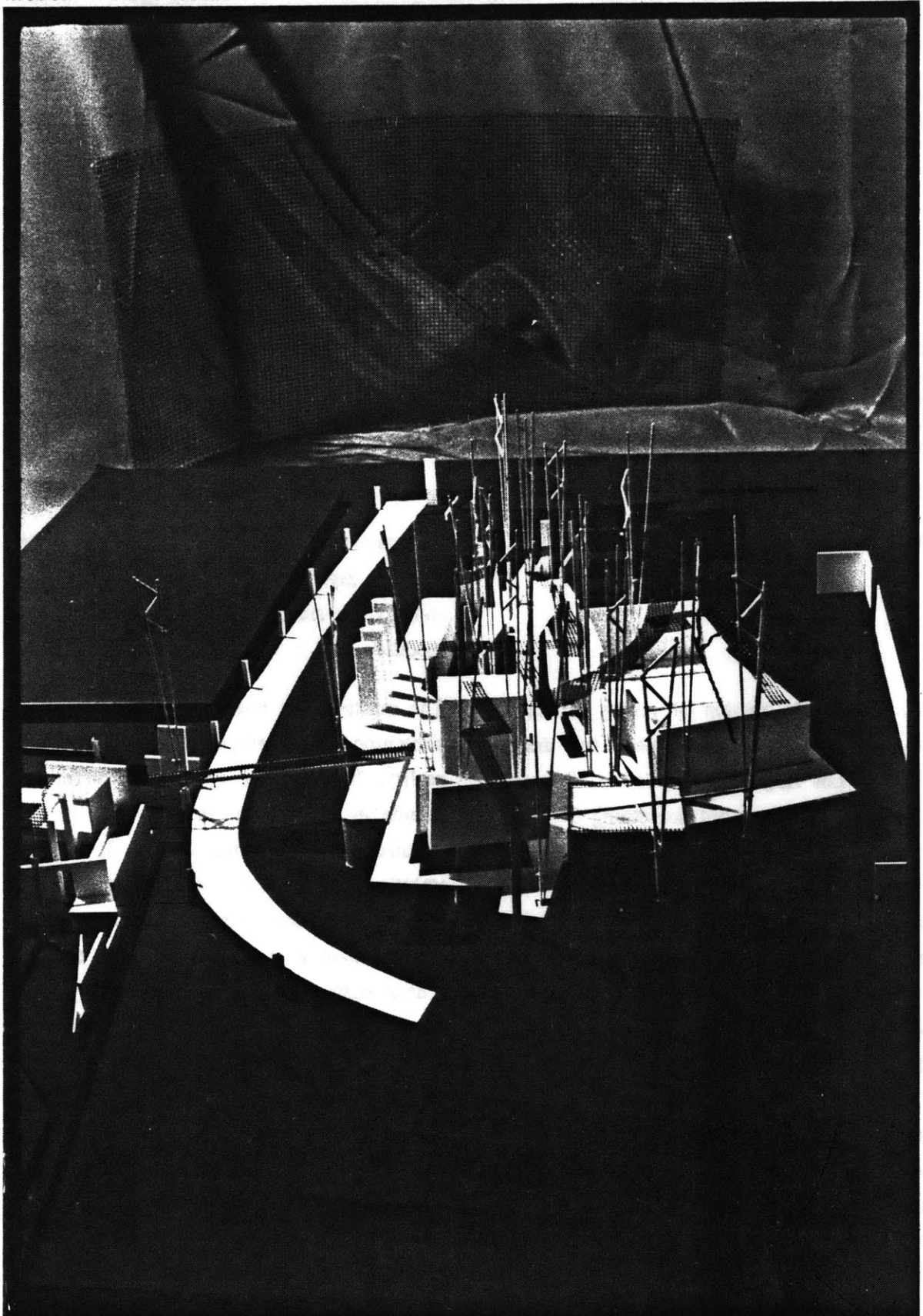
Italo Calvino, Mr. Palomar

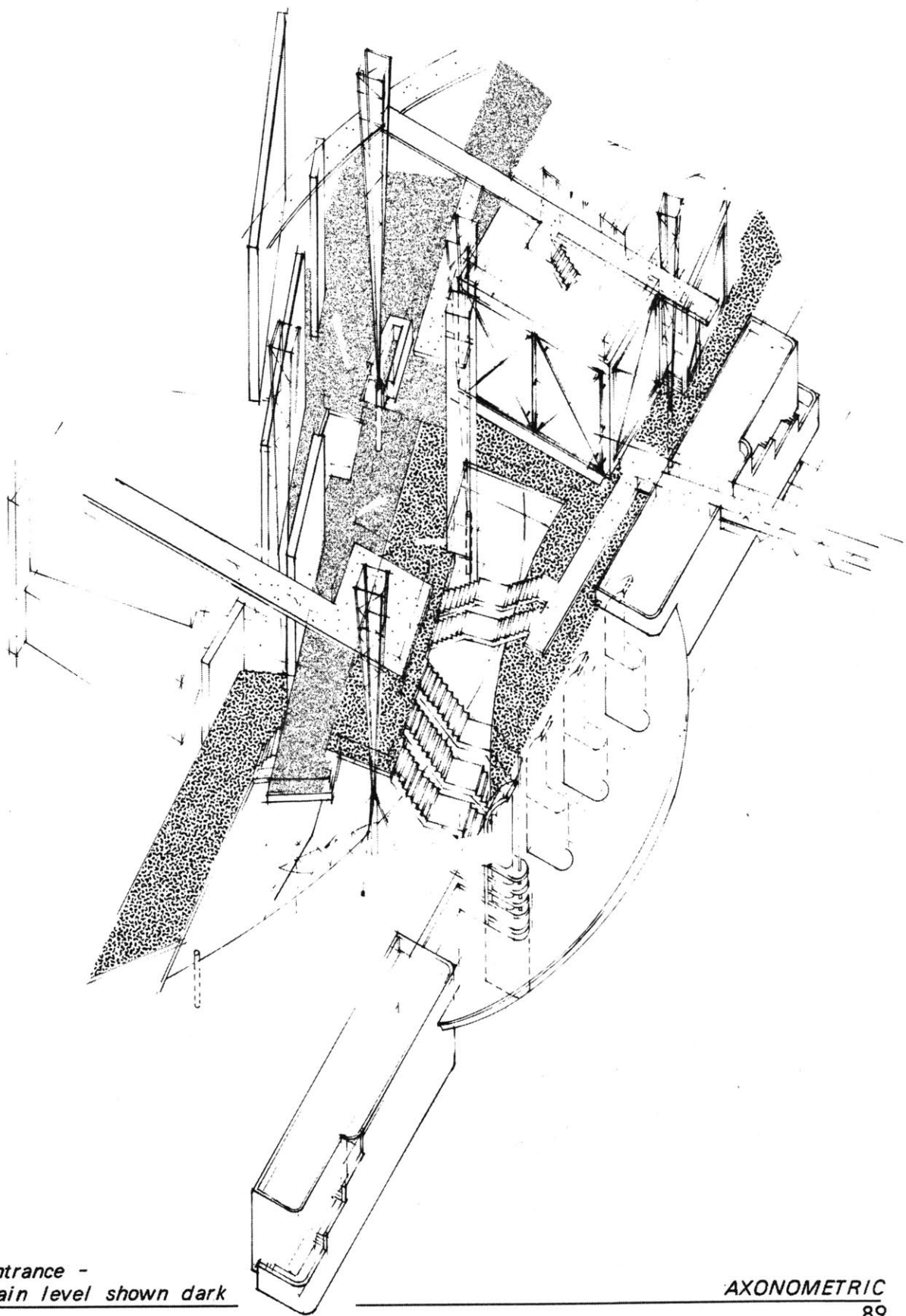
Mr. Palomar's opinion of reality is similar to the way I see, in retrospect, this design for the Los Angeles Film Center. I know that architecture is not something re-invented with only "desire" to do so, instead it becomes accumulations, combinations, re-interpretations of what we already know. But rather than using a "kit of parts" and borrowing literally from sources I see the interest of generative knowledge and form become the something "new". Architecture is not perfect - there is no one "model"; more it becomes a series of models. Each individual architect assumes an affinity towards either a style or an attitude in their designs. In reality this design for the Film Center is a collection of spatial, formal and material

characteristics I like. Human nature as Mr. Palomar says "must force it more or less roughly, to assume the form of the model."

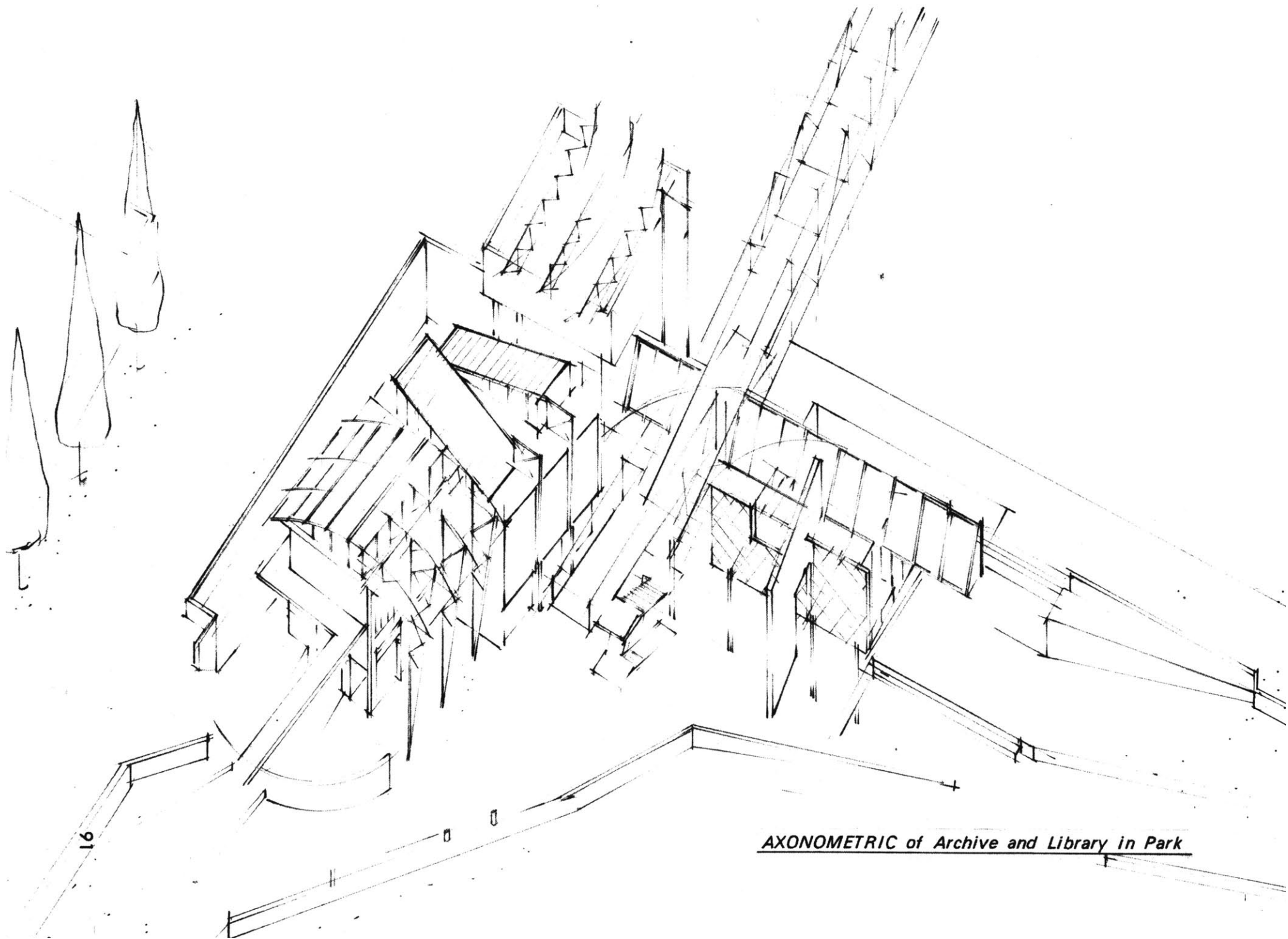
The multi-media images in this contemporary society distort the notion of reality; "realities" interpreted by different people in different ways - at least in a physical form like architecture. It is an ambitious task to make the architecture somehow coincide with the complexity of visual images in a film center like the one I have designed. But as Frank Gehry once asked, "What are we passing by, what aren't we doing? What aren't we listening to?" There are always possibilities for new options, new models. There is not one clear way to look at the world, or a clear image about how one should pursue the future in architecture - only illusions about design to work towards. Who knows? This thesis is a start - I'll just keep trying.

Model - View North

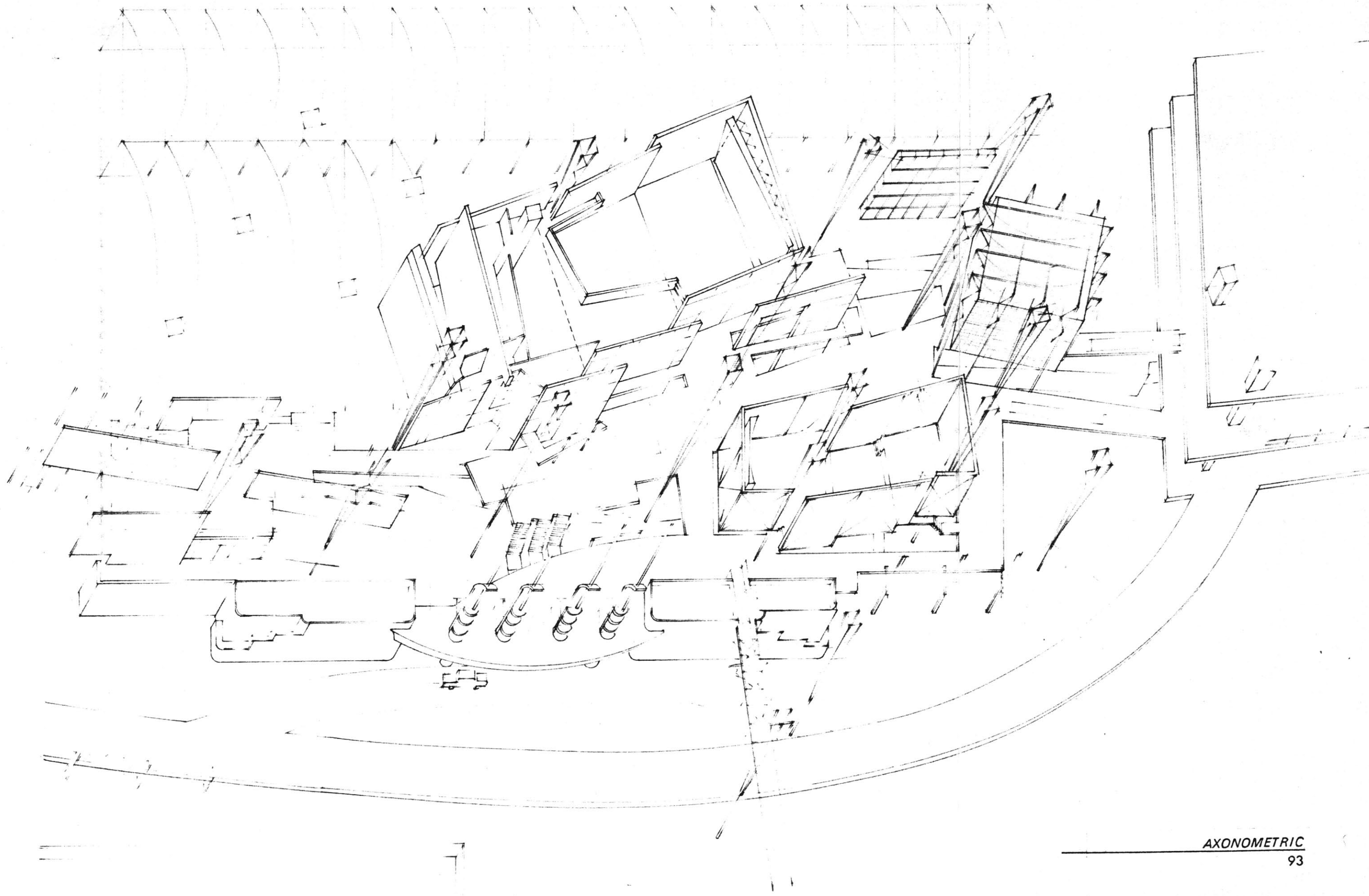


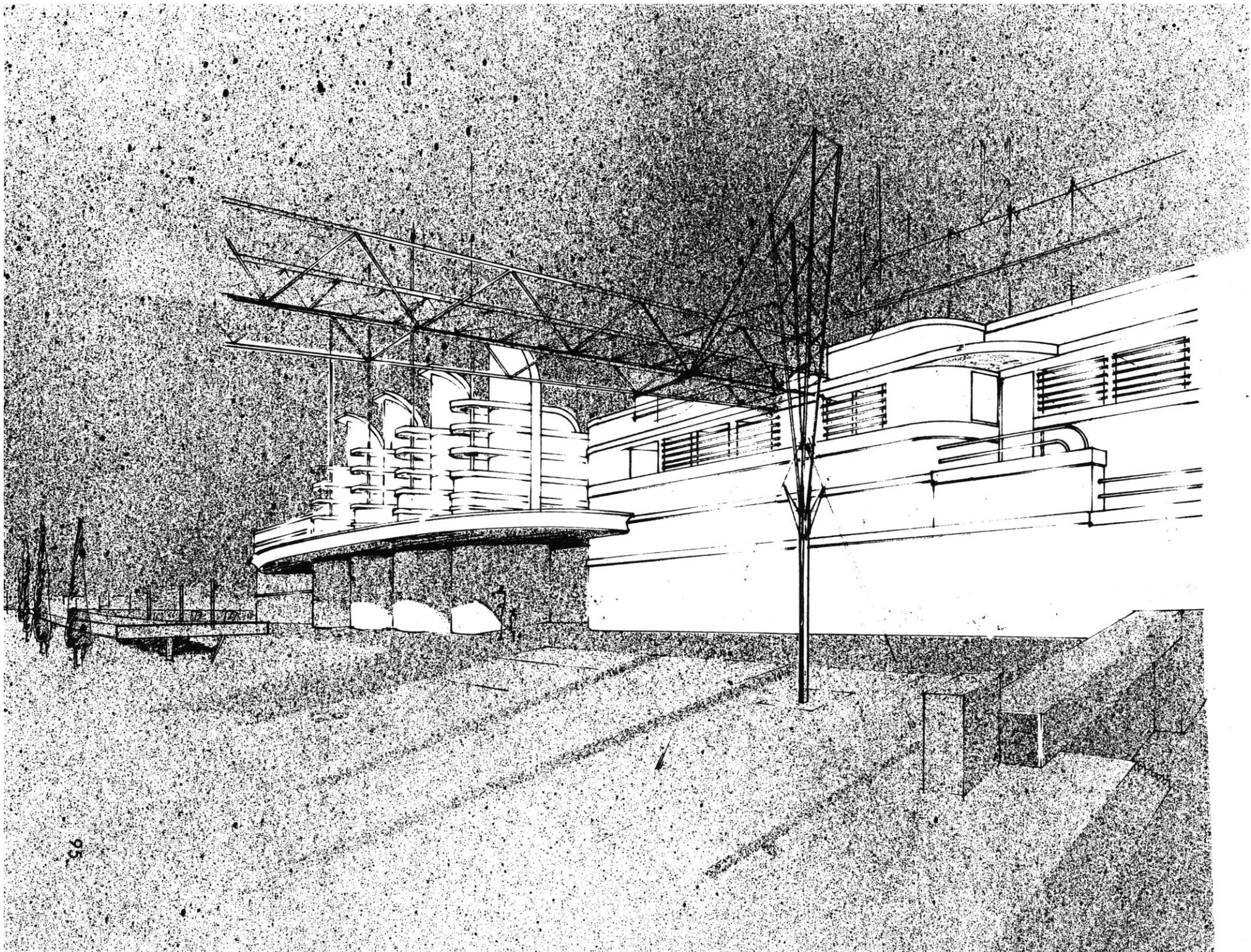


*entrance -
main level shown dark*



AXONOMETRIC of Archive and Library in Park





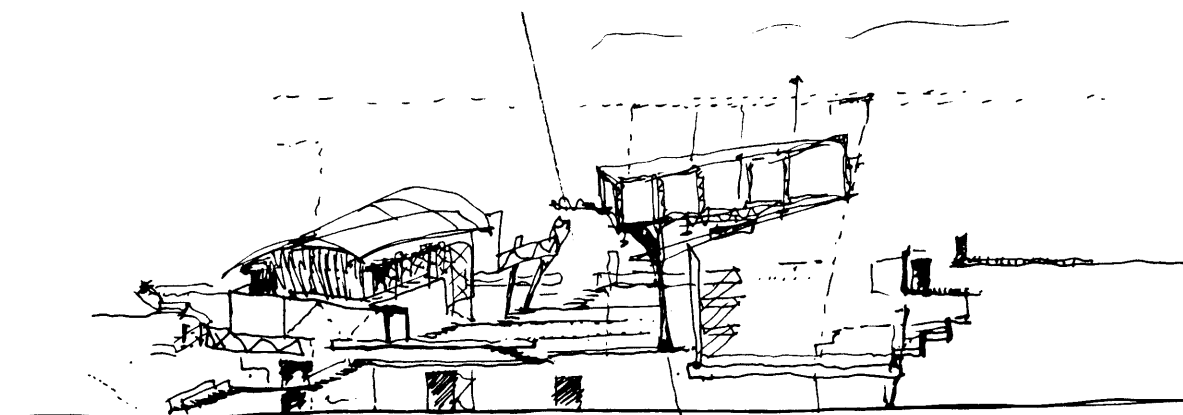
10. Appendices

It would be ideal to build architecture without objectives then release it for free use.

Coop Himmelblau

10.1 Program

<i>THEATRES</i>		<i>Total: 24,200 square feet</i>
1000 Seat Theatre	11,000	
500 Seat Theatre	5,500	
250 Seat Theatre	3,500	
Multi Media Moving Image Lab	1,600	
also: Projection Booths		
Organ Chambers		
Relay Rooms		
Technical Support Space	2,600	
<i>GALLERY</i>		<i>Total: 10,300</i>
Lobby Sales		
Concessions		
Exhibits		
Permanent Collection		
Temporary Exhibits		
Restaurant		
Cafe, Bar		
Box Office	4,700	
Founders Lounge	1,500	
Gallery Storage	2,100	
Gallery Support		
Ushers		
Merchandise		
Housemanager Office	1,000	
Main Workshop	1,000	



ADMINISTRATION

Total: 6,840

Offices	
Film Handling/Receiving	
Conference Room	3,000
Director	1,200
Xerox/Mail	1,540
Clerical/Bookkeeping	350
Public Relations/Grants	300

STUDY CENTER

Total: 13,000

Library	7,500
Archives	
Video Collection	
Video Curator	
Film Study	1,900
Lecture Program	1,230
Prints/Graphics	230
Maintenance Shop	1,540
Screening Rooms (2)	600

This program is compiled from the American Cinematique and Somerset developers as well as a program for an Institute for the Filmic Image project from the Rhode Island School of Design.

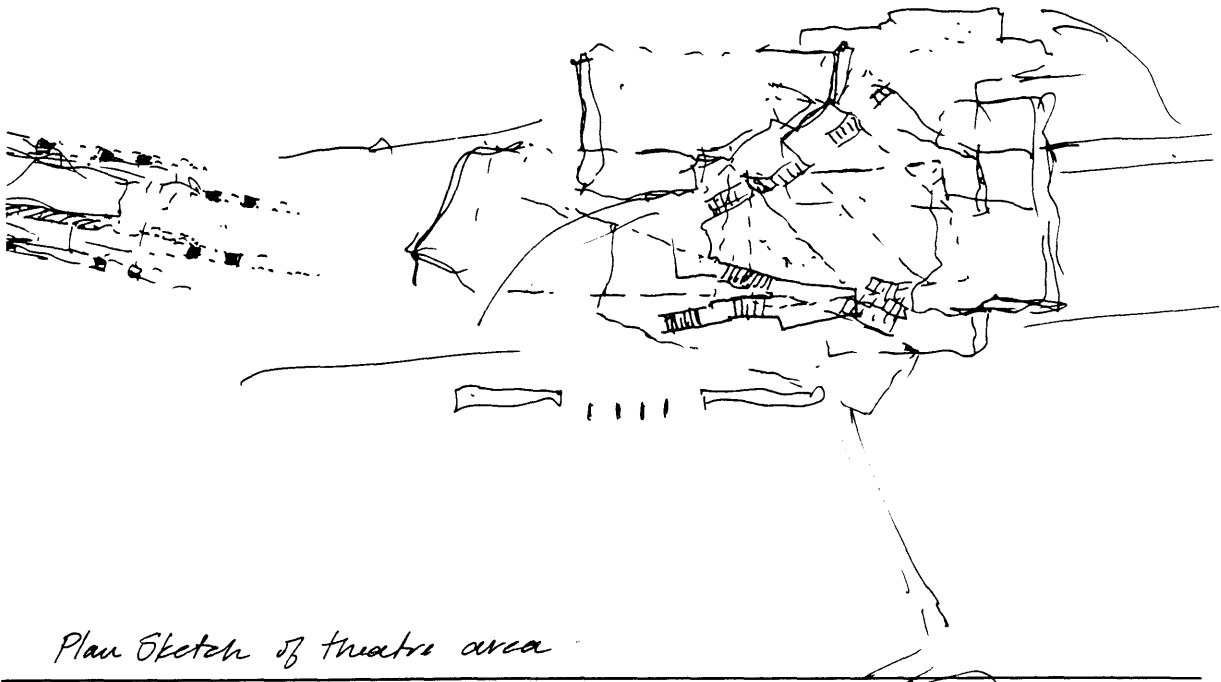
10.2 Sketches and Studies

It can never be Past, because at conception it becomes Future. The instant conception differentiates and decides. It is this instant free from pressure, cliché, ideology and formalism, then architecture becomes free. Then the circumstantial pressures crumble. Causality is overturned.

Architecture is Now 1983

Coop Himmelblau

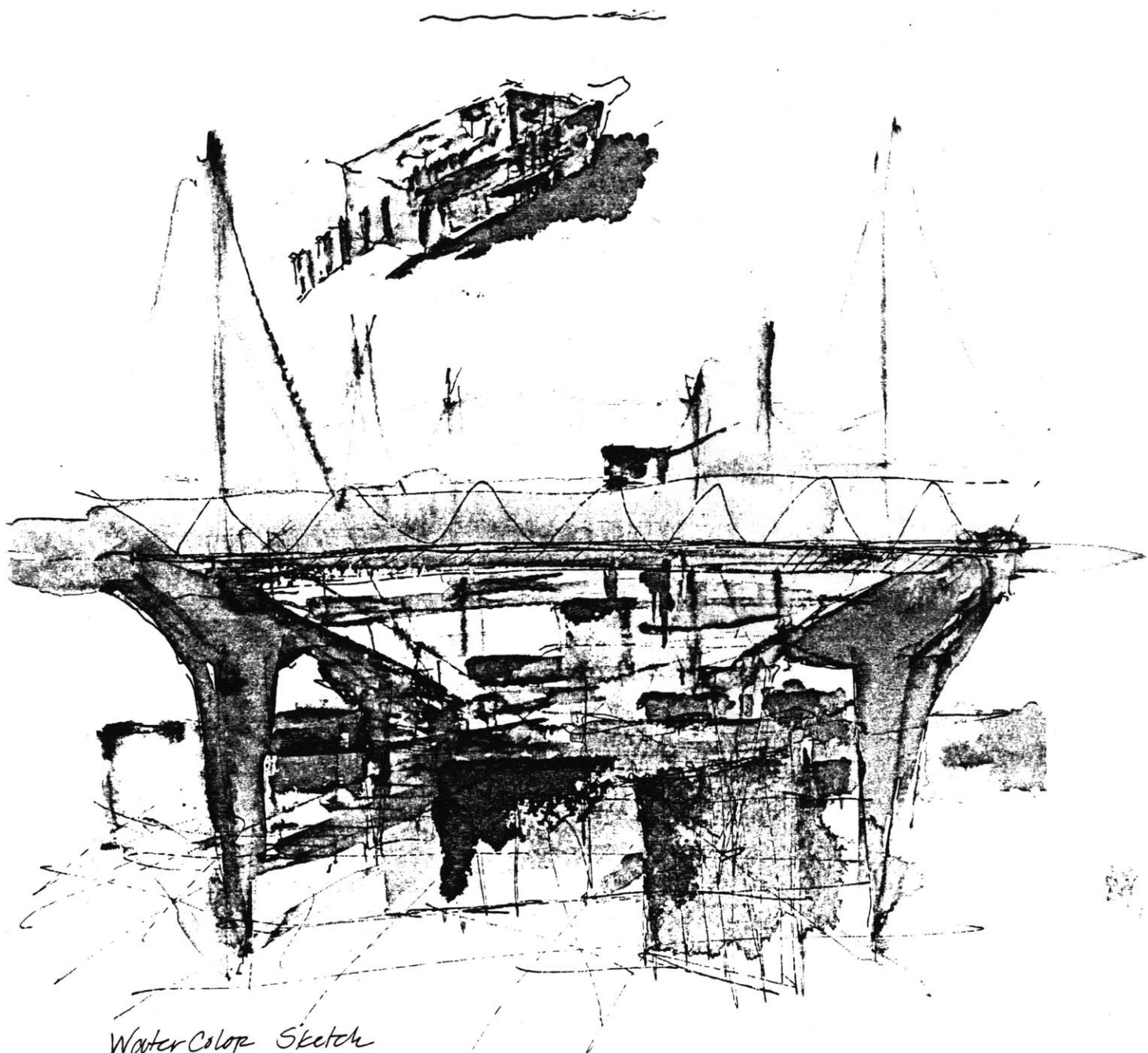
This is an abbreviated collection of drawings and schemes done throughout the semester.



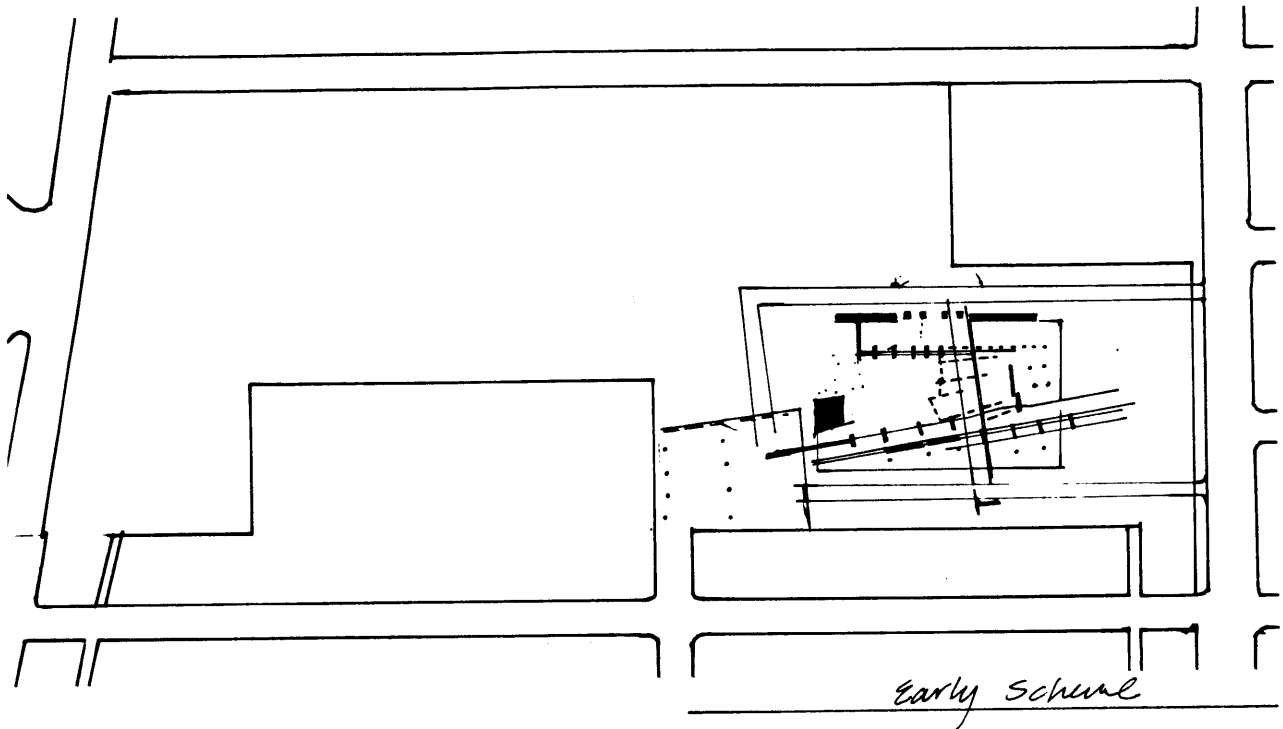
Plan Sketch of theatre area



Water Color Sketch



Water Color Sketch

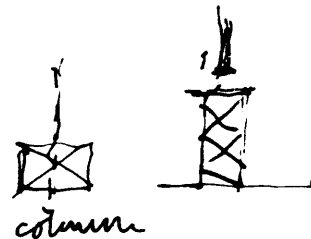


stall system

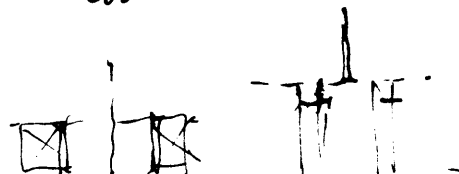


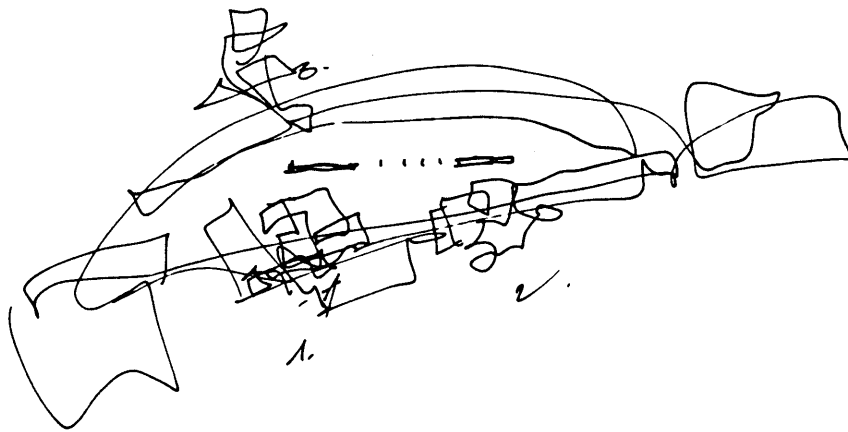
21' dimension can move horizontally

light above the columns



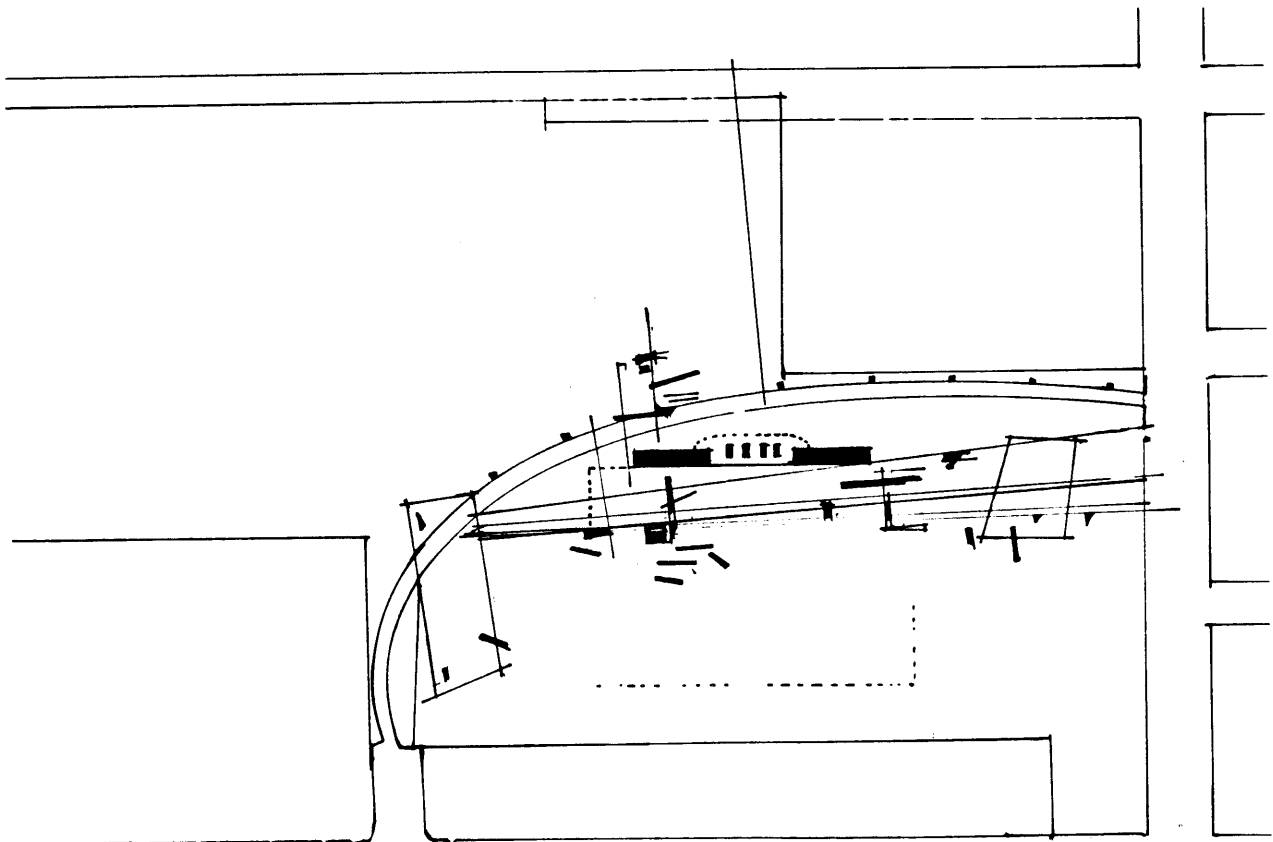
stalls perpendicular

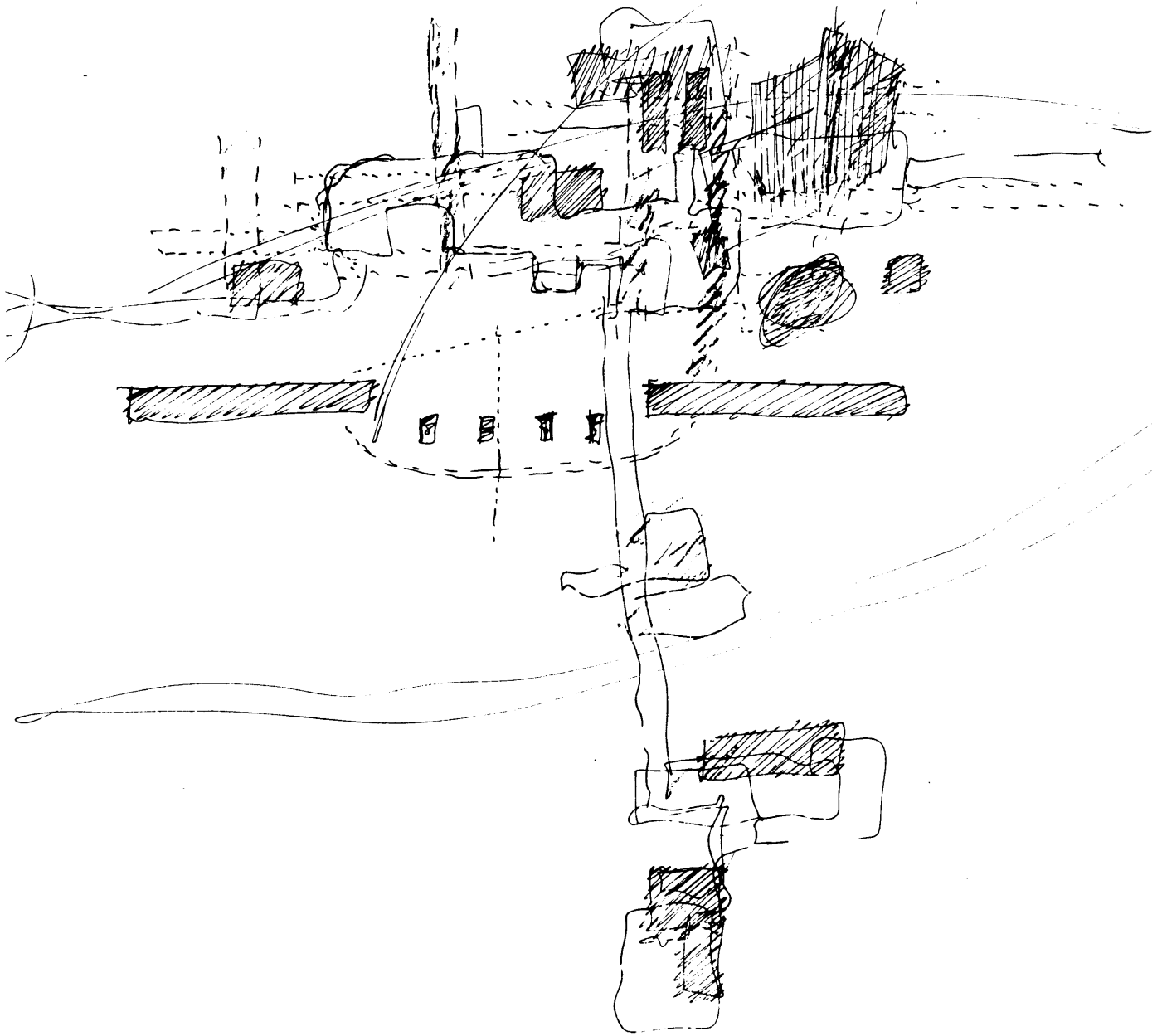




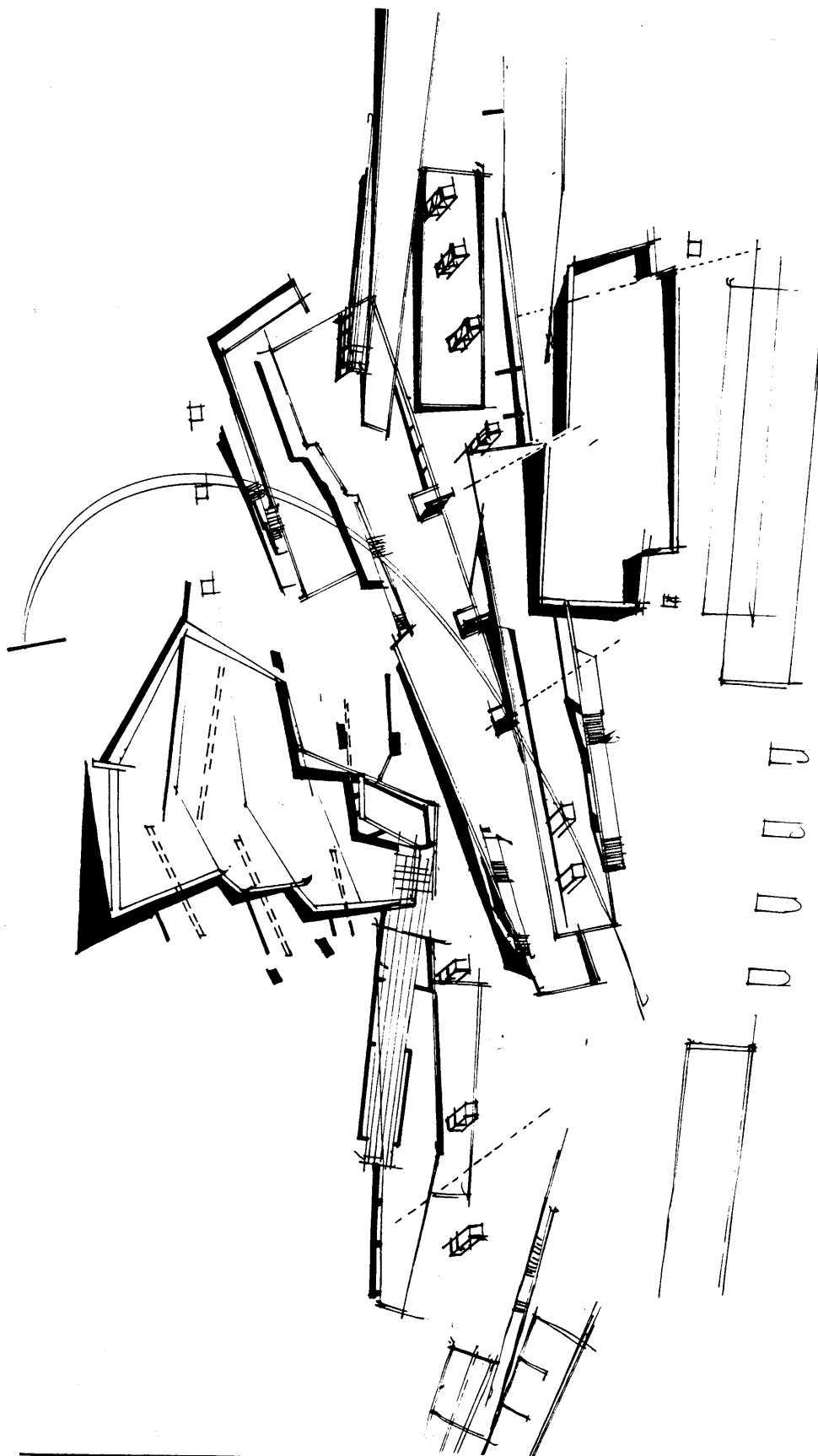
Phantus
fame
gally
②. admin
③. study

Plan Sketches

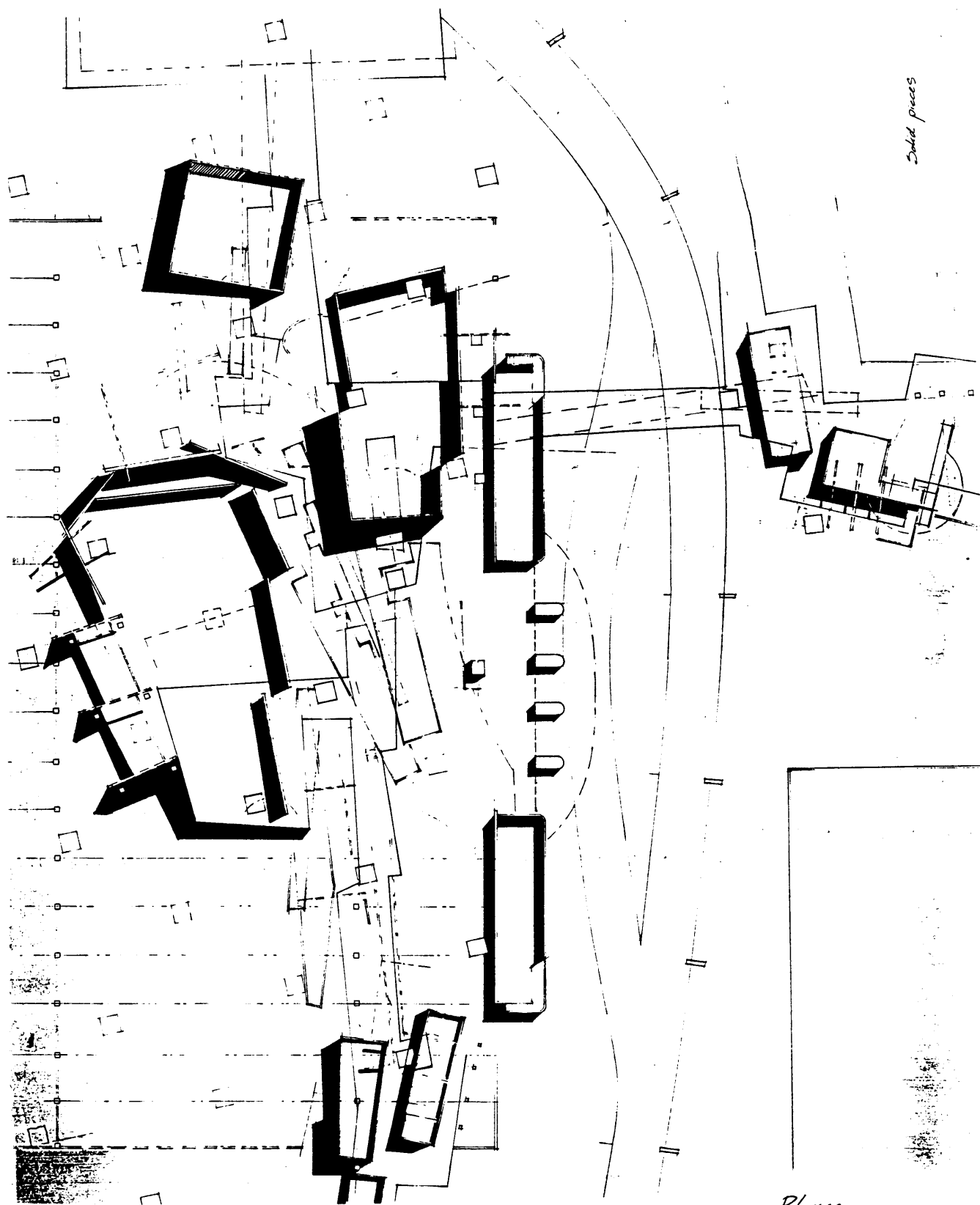




Early Plan/Sketch

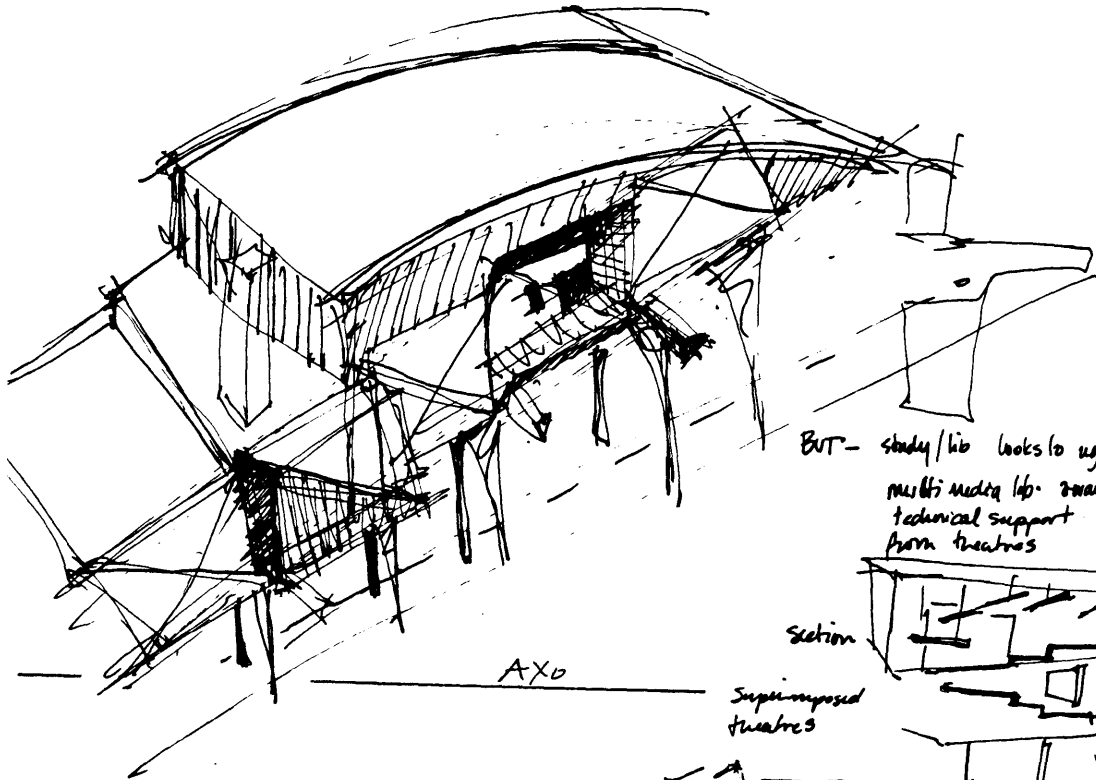


Plan



Solid pieces

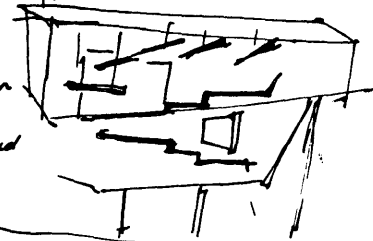
Plan



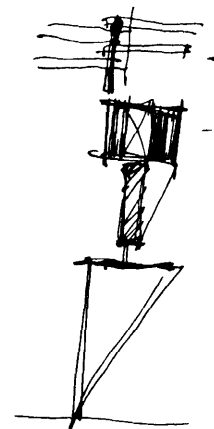
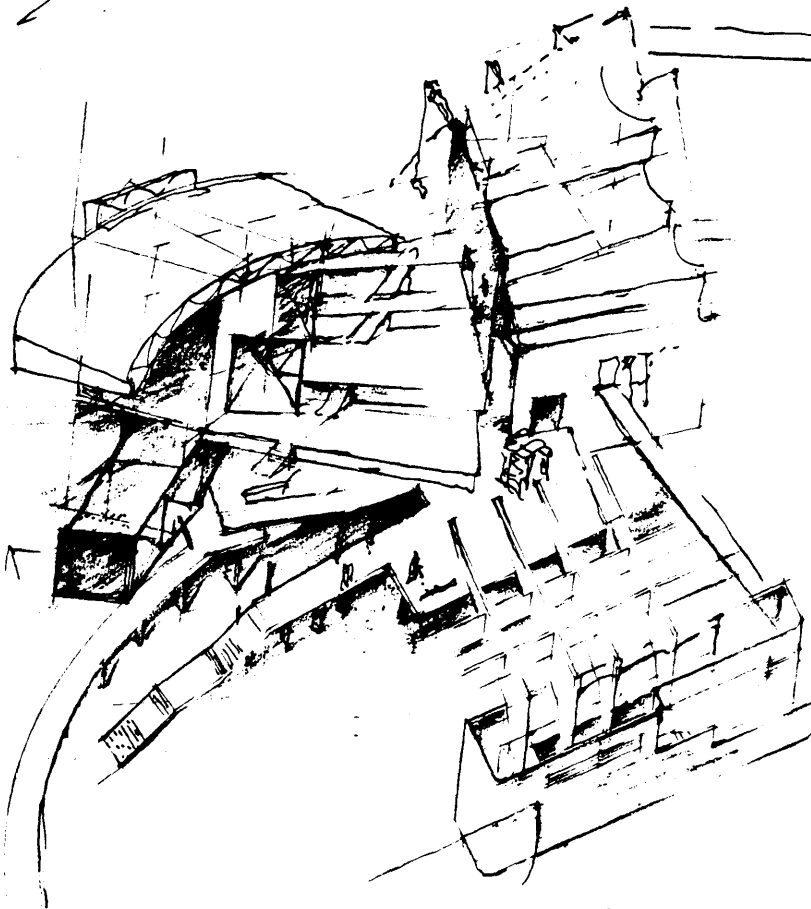
BUT - study/lib looks to ugly - but North
multi media lib. away from
technical support but across
from theatres

section

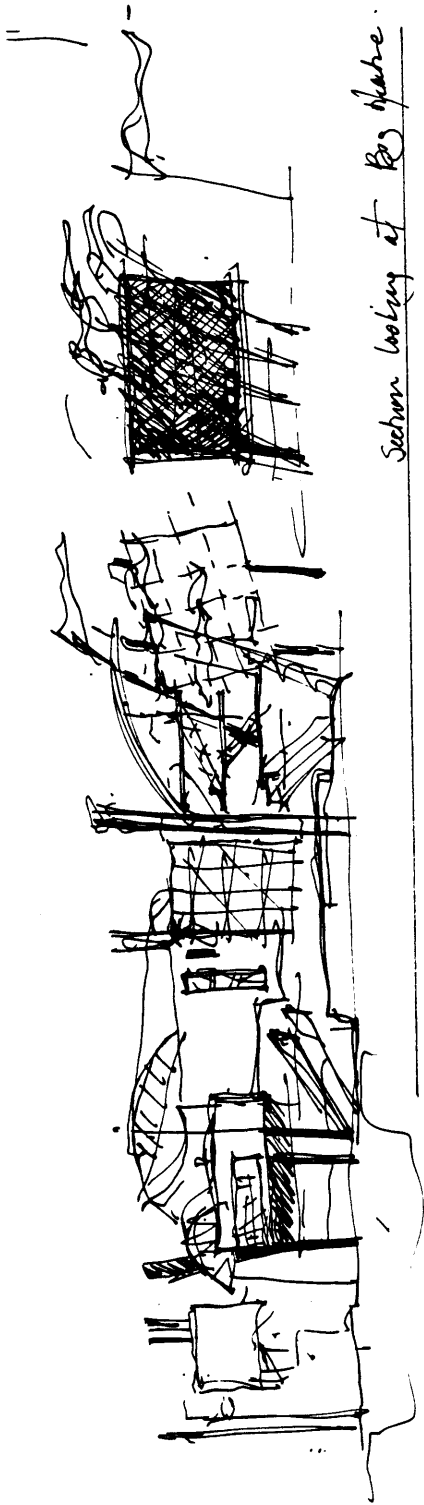
Superimposed
theatres



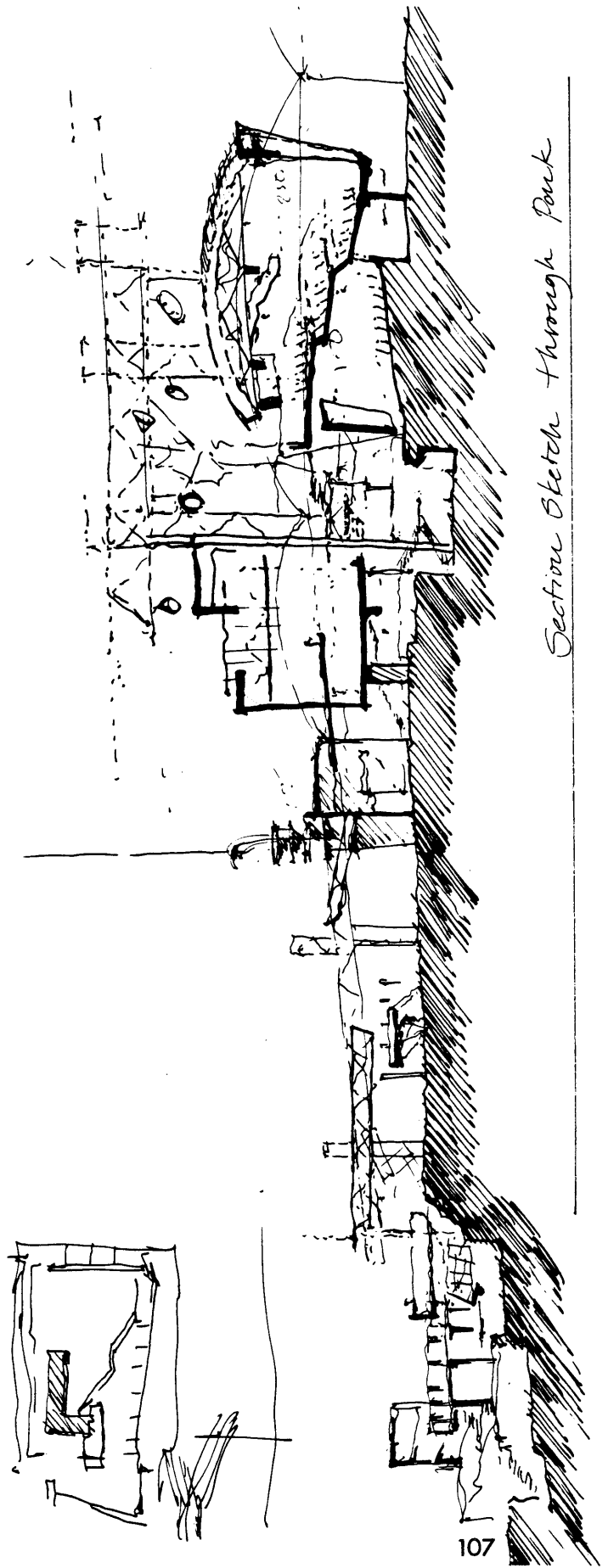
Section



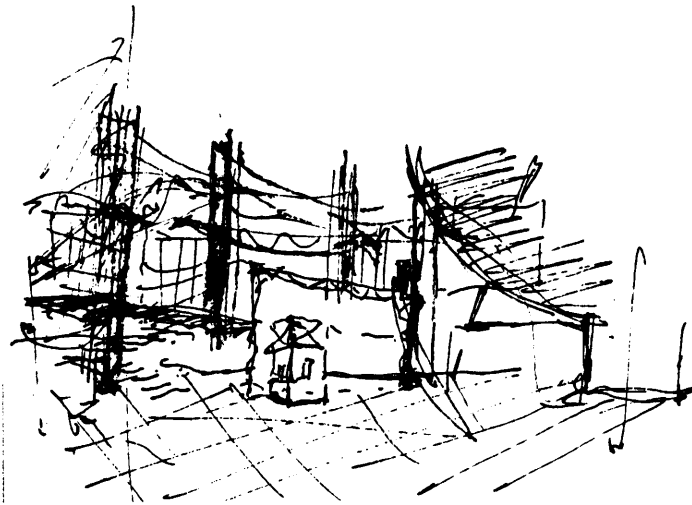
detail



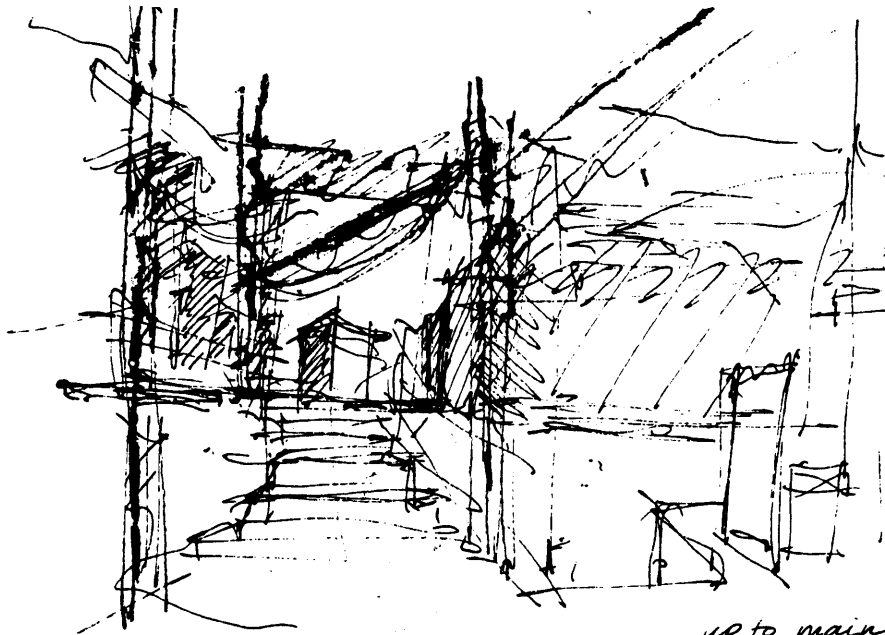
Section looking at Big plate.



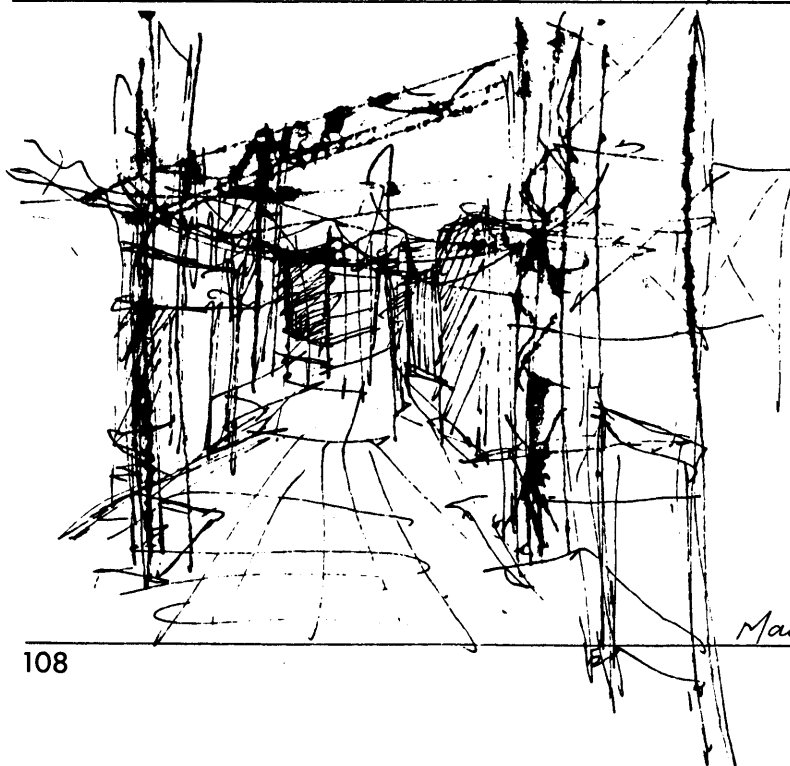
Section Sketch Through Park



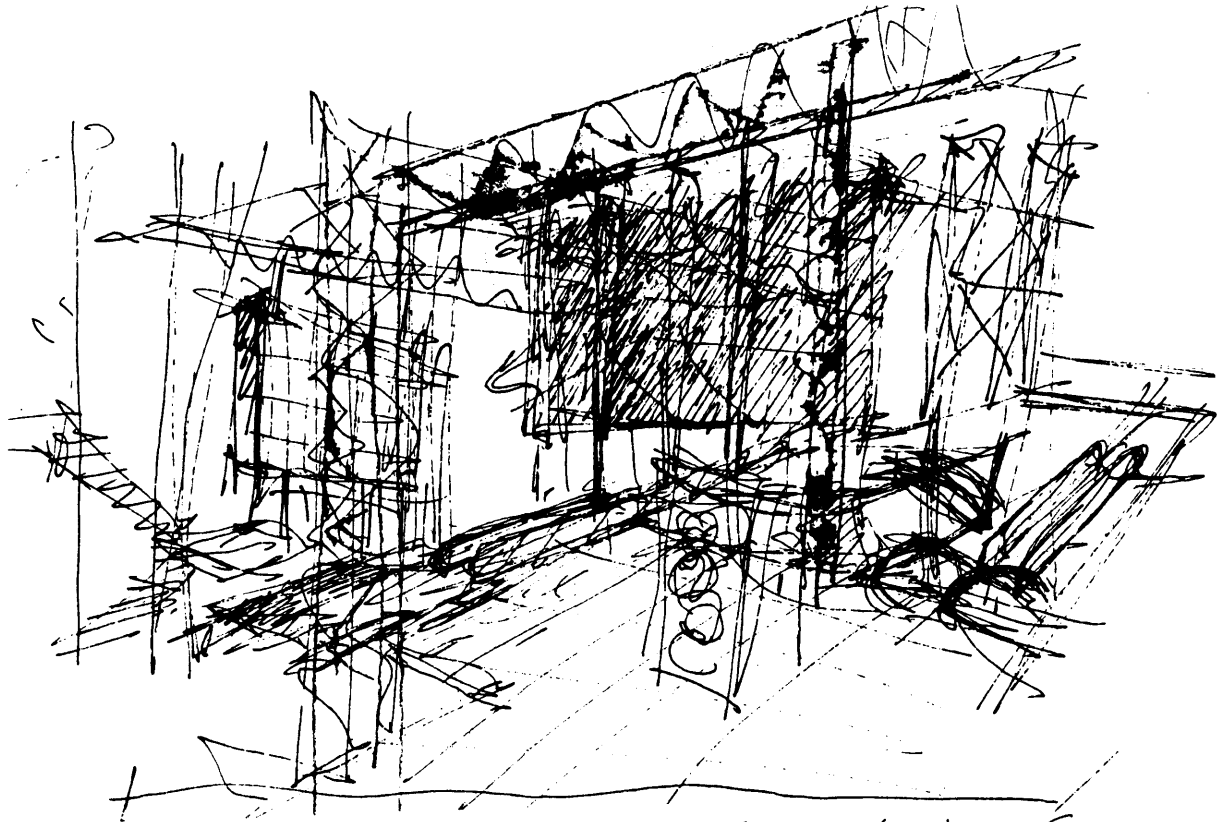
entrance



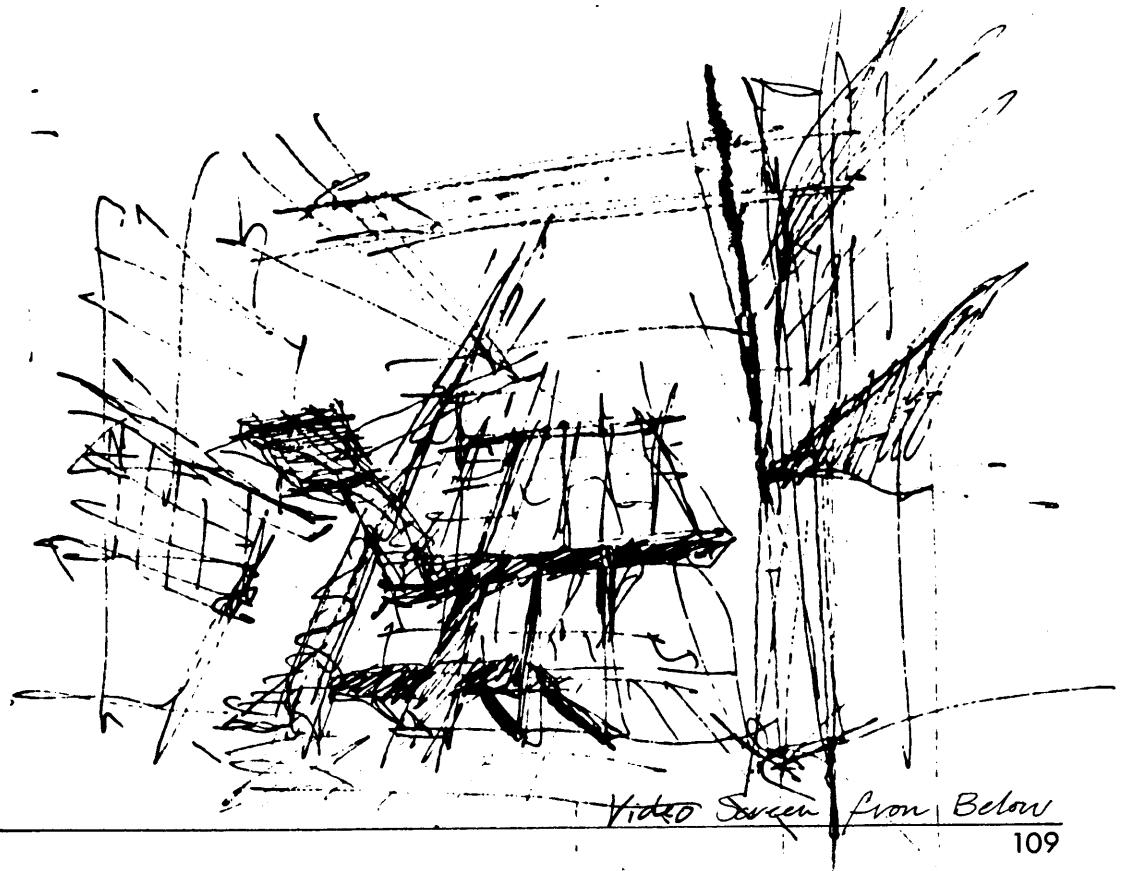
up to main level



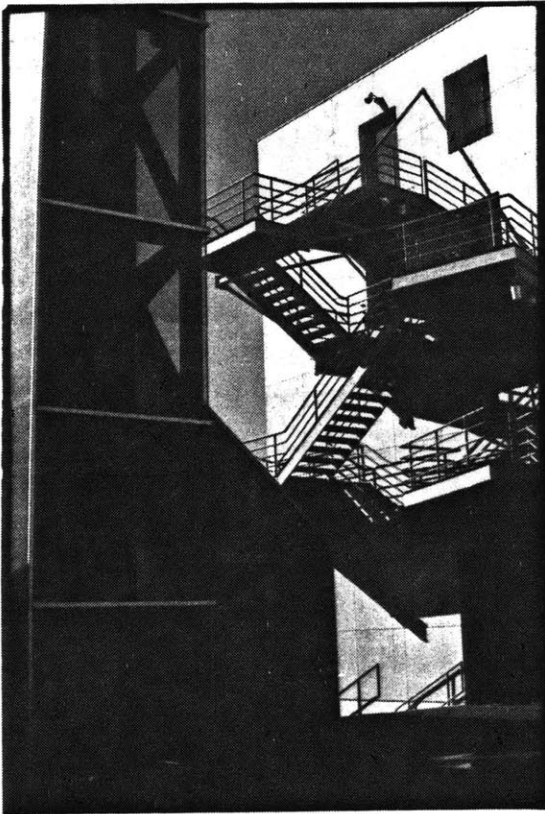
Main level



Main level is Video Screen



Video Screen from Below



Loyola Law School - Gehry

10.3 References

I will not go into much depth about why I choose to look at these references, but I generally support forms which address notions about contemporary architecture: that which seeks to look ahead to re-interpret form and to understand the manner in which it may change if it is necessary to change.

Early in the 20th Century, artists began to change the way in which the world perceived space. The Cubists, Suprematists, Constructivists and so on each explored different interpretations to form, style and space. A deep sense of unrest politically, socially economically attributed to these changes for the new industrial and mechanized world in the avant-garde modern movement.

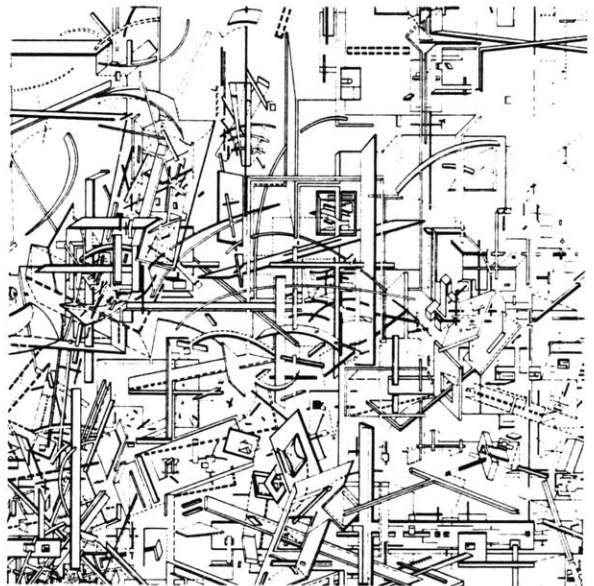
Los Angeles has...a healthy dislike for protocol.

Peter Cook

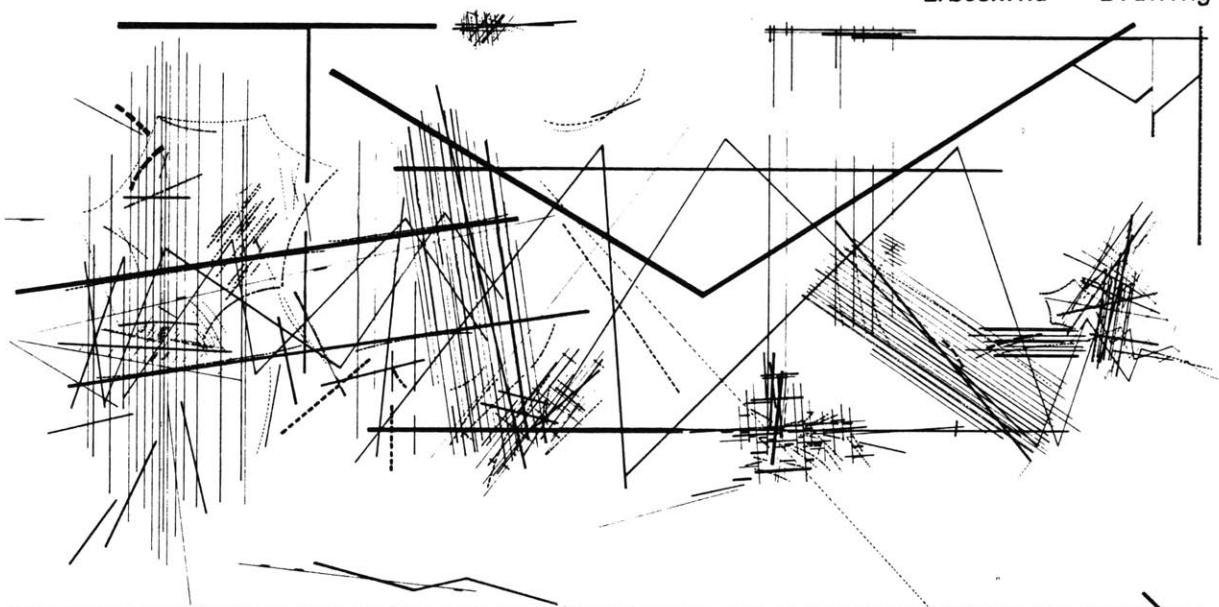
Erich Mendelsohn



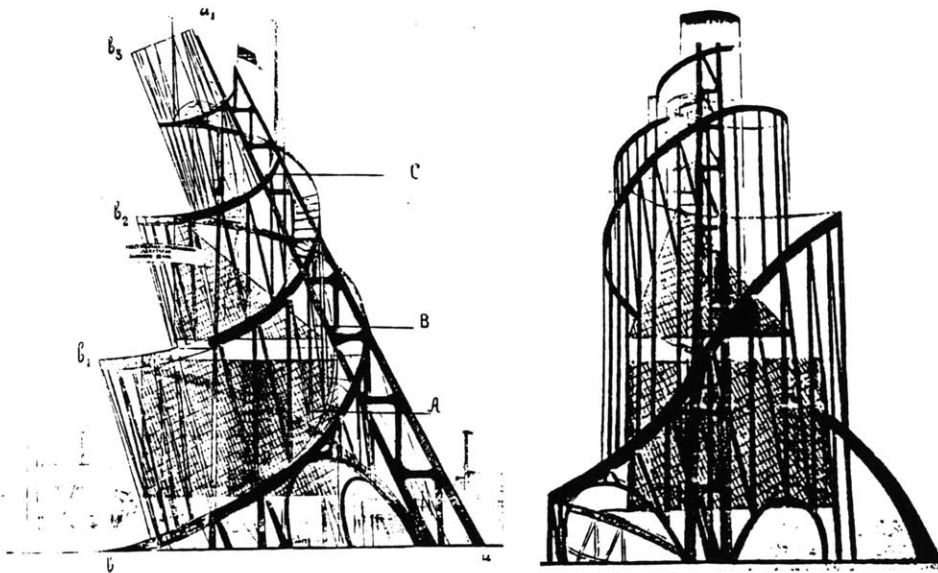
In Los Angeles now the affinity towards a new architecture comes more from an art source than a political one. Los Angeles has a reputation consumeristic and materialistic place, the trends come and go. But I think some innovative and refreshing work is being built in Los Angeles. The city has - in a way been the last frontier in this country - and remains so to a certain extent. I have already described why I feel this way in the Introduction. Some of the work I find most interesting here are references for the Film Center.



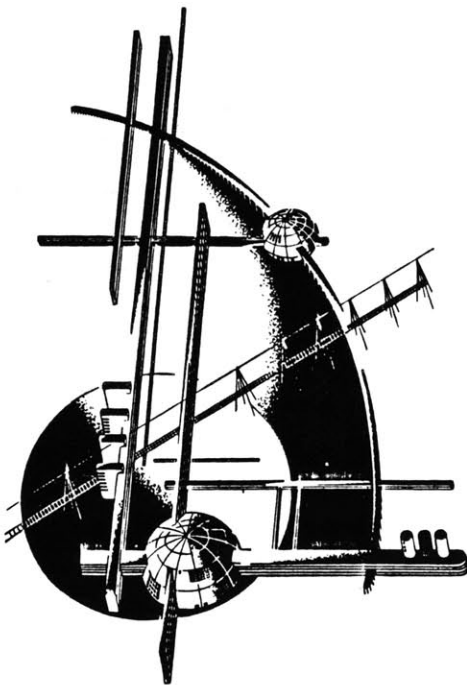
Libeskind - Cranbrook



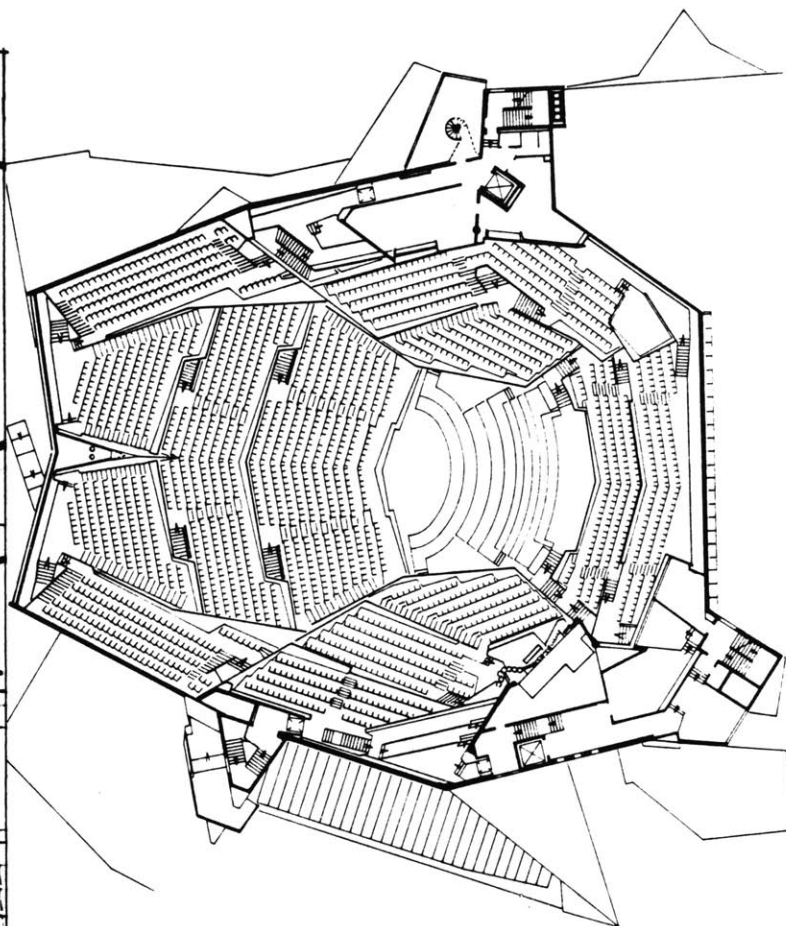
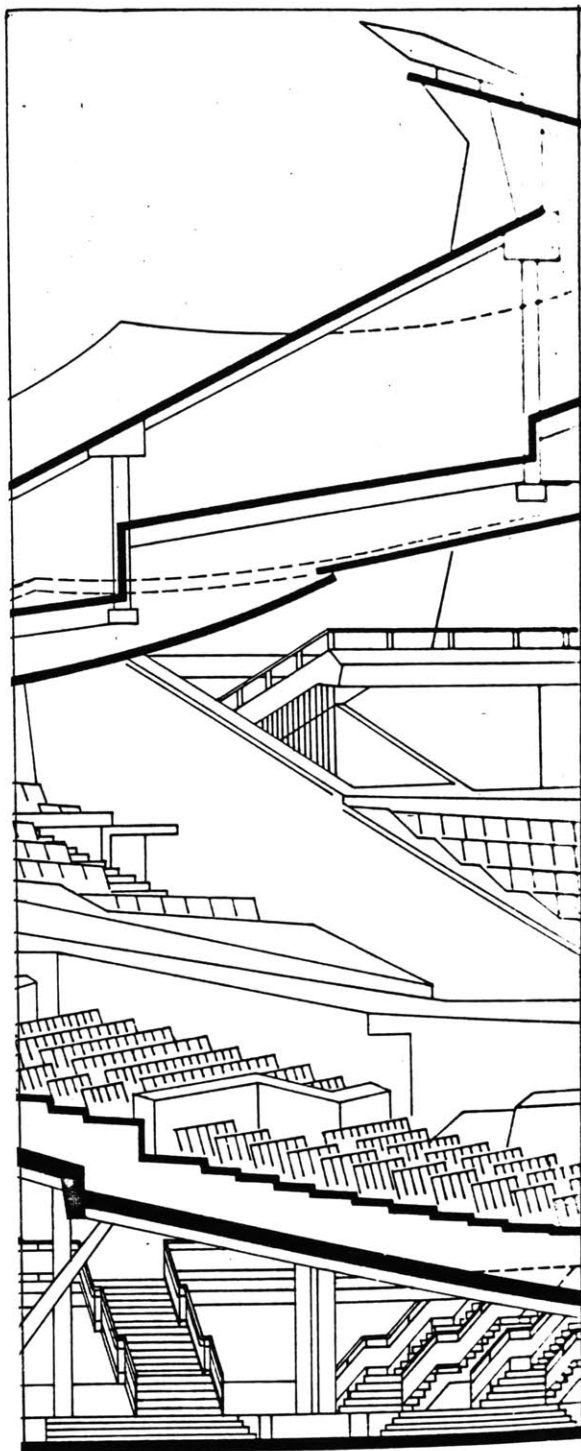
Libeskind - Drawing



Tatlin - Monument to the 3rd International 1920

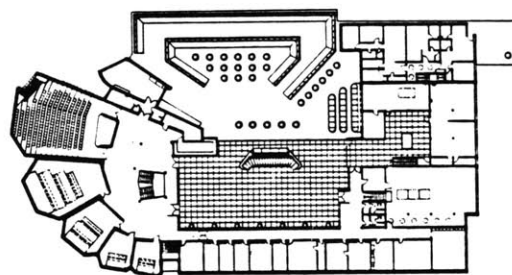


chernecov

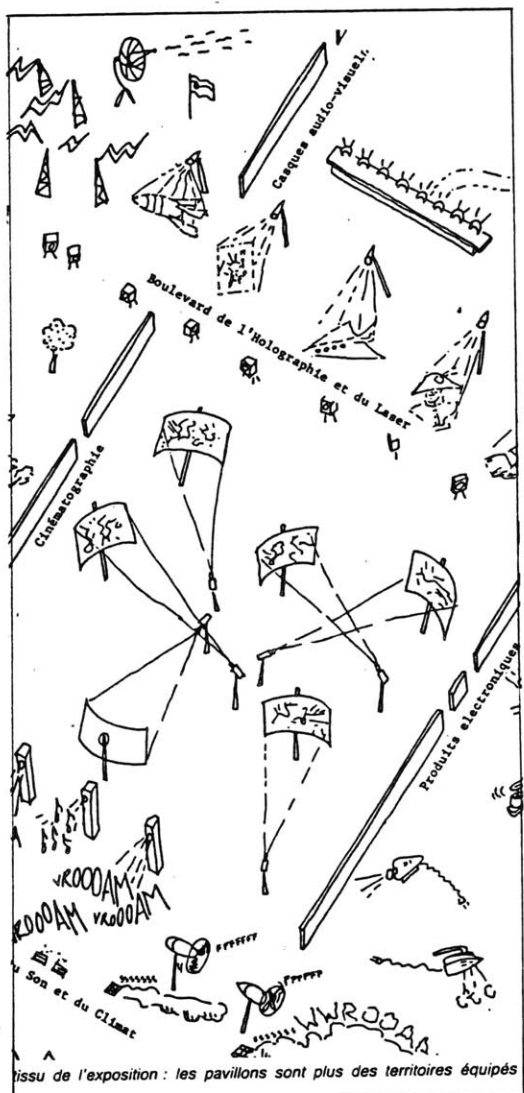


Scharoun - Berlin Philharmonie

AALTO Cultural Centre Wolfsburg 1958.
ground and first floor plans.

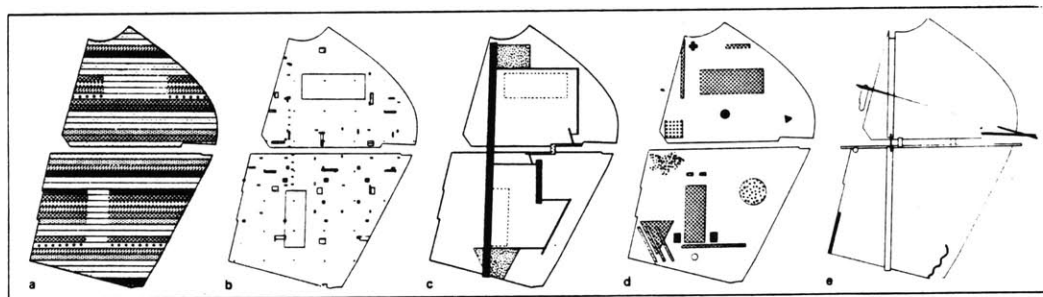


Alvar Aalto

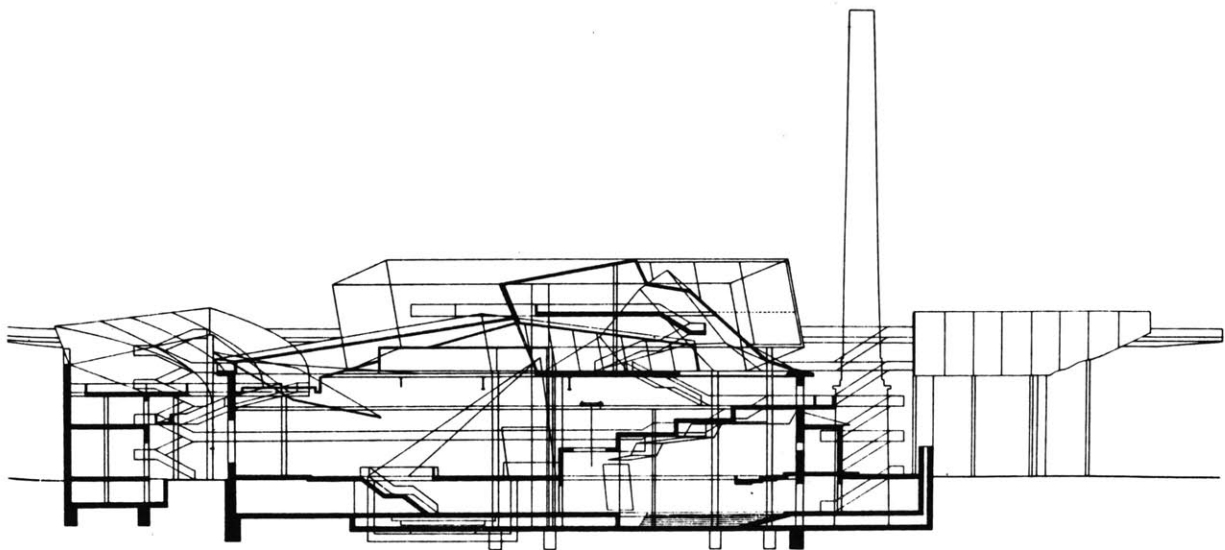


tissu de l'exposition : les pavillons sont plus des territoires équipés

OMA - Exposition Universelle de Paris



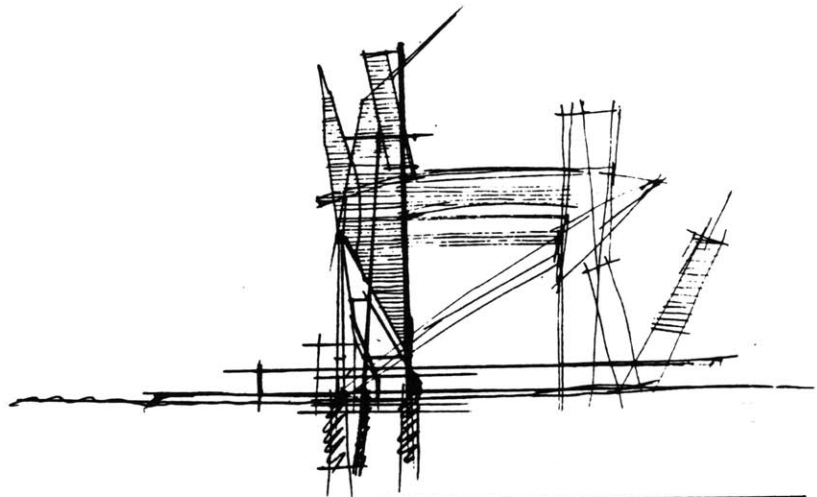
OMA - Parc de la Villette (competition entry)



Coupe longitudinale

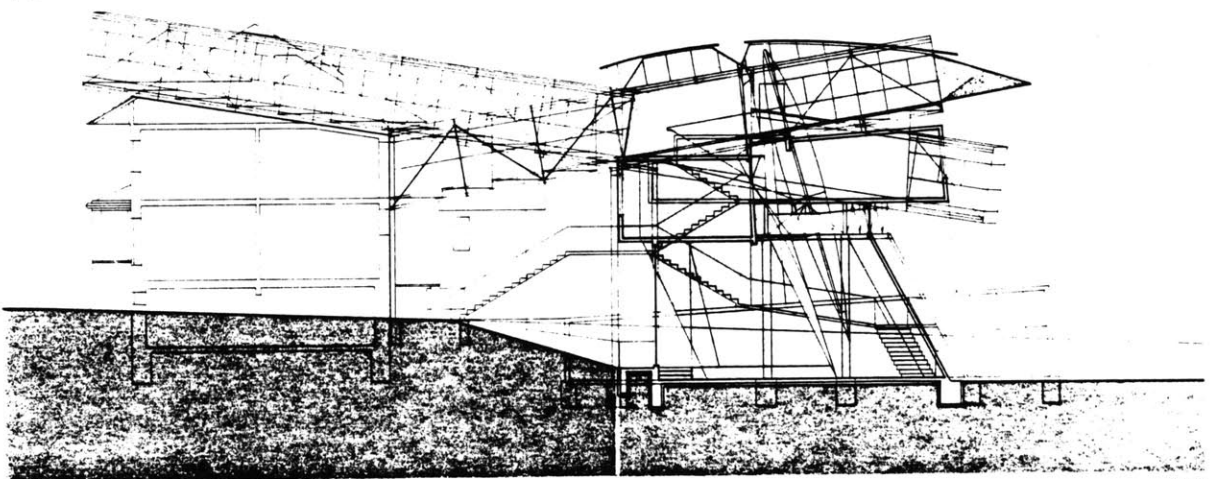
0 2 4 6 8 10m

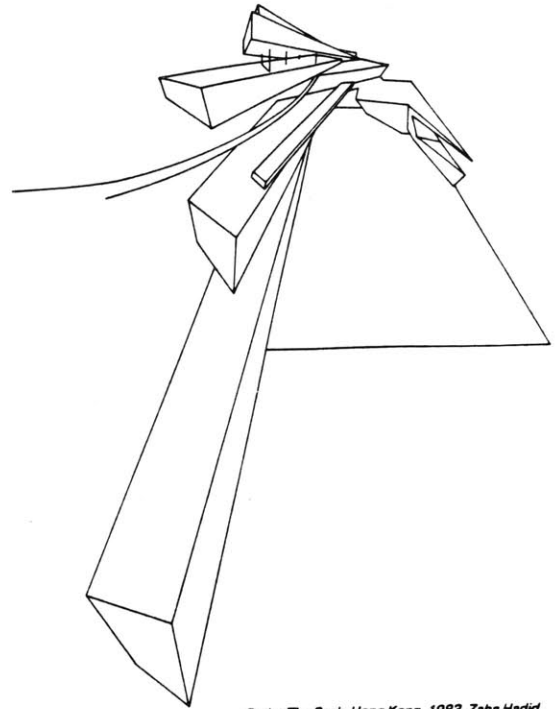
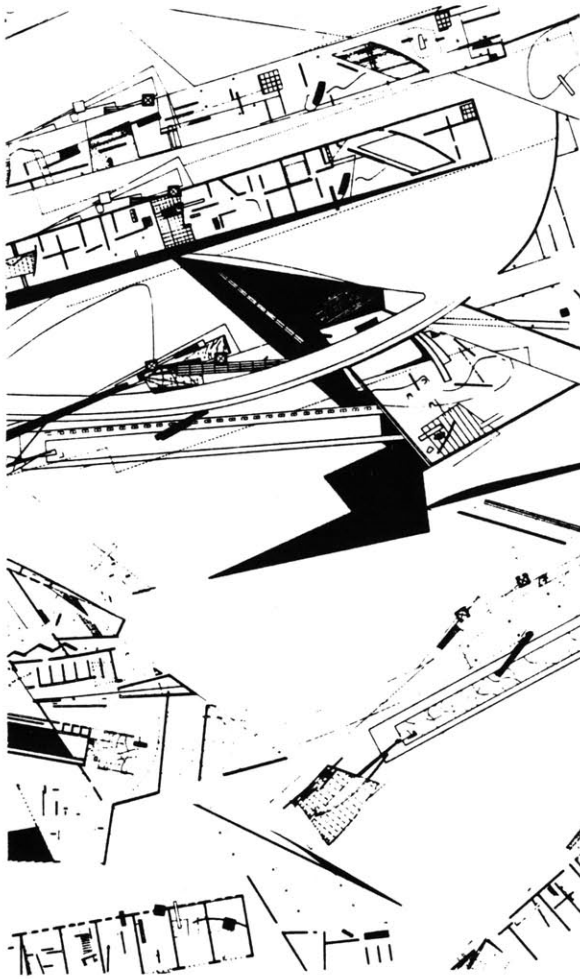
Coop Himmelblau - Open System



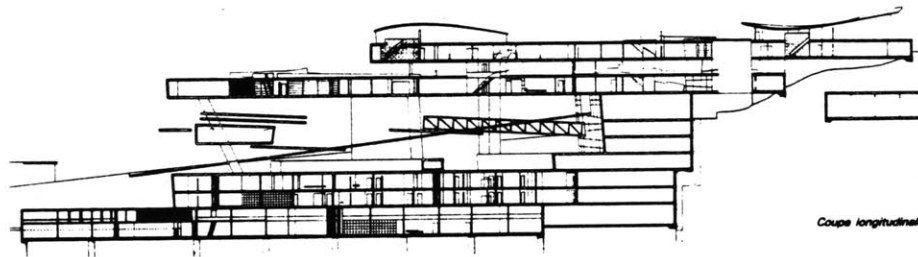
Coop Himmelblau - Skyscraper-Hamburg

Hertz School



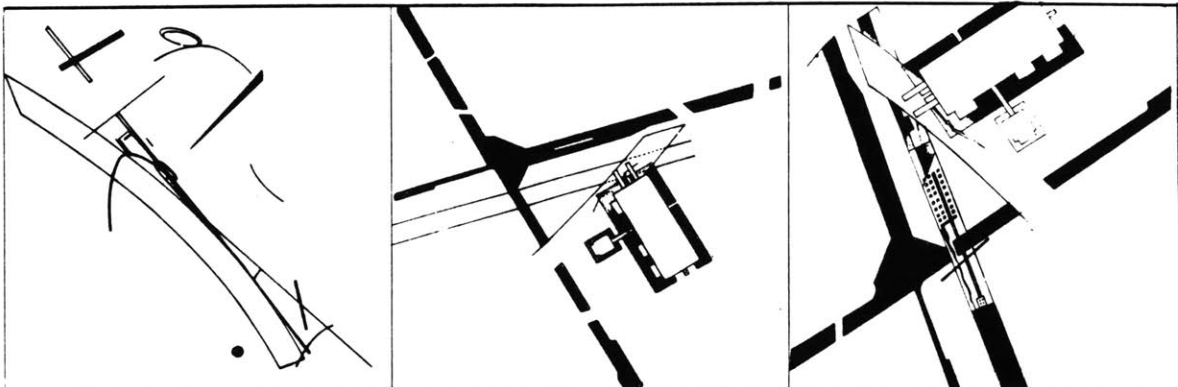


Projet The Peak, Hong Kong, 1983, Zaha Hadid.

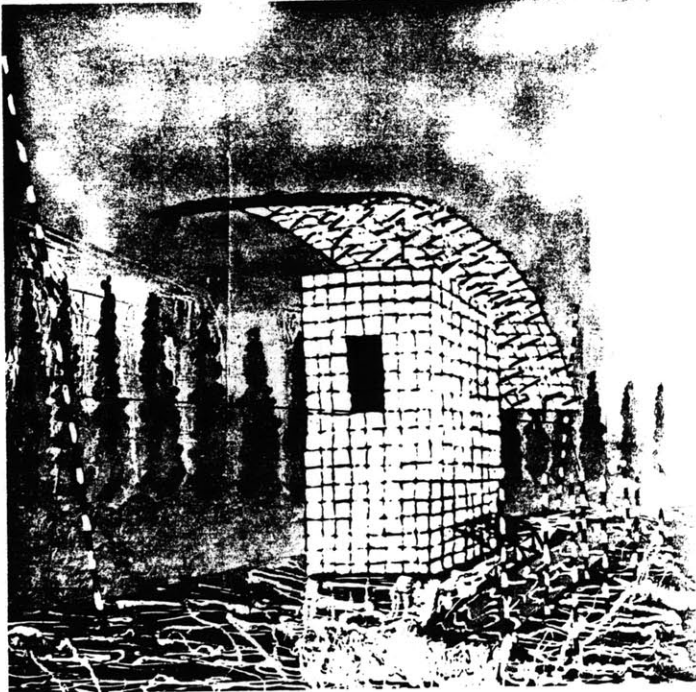


Coupe longitudinale.

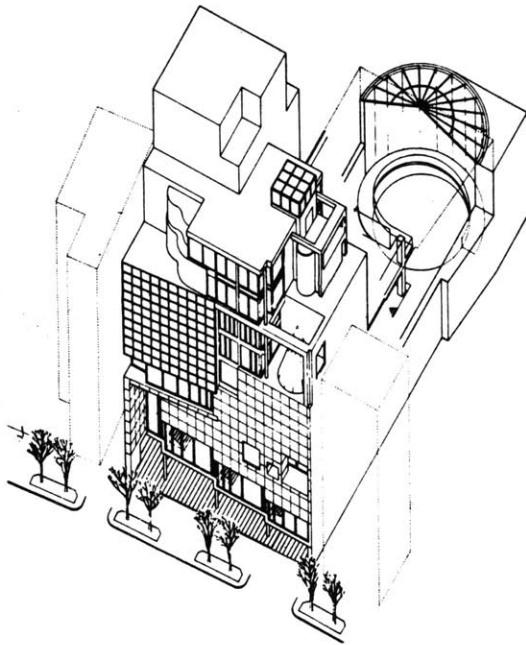
Zaha Hadid - Hong Kong "Peak"



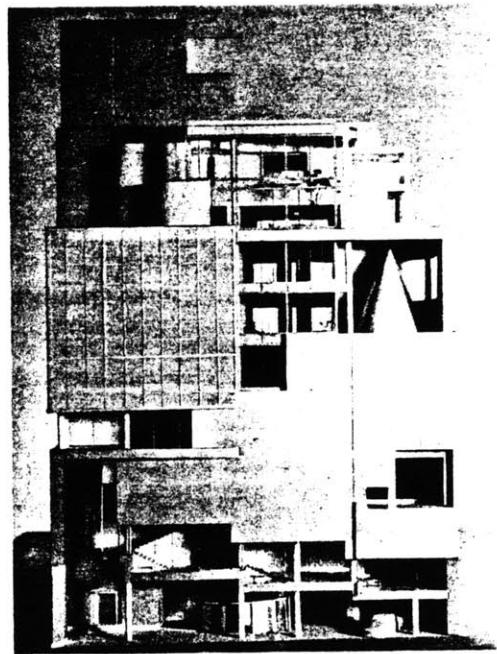
Zaha Hadid - Park de la Villette (Competition Entry)



William Alsop - drawing

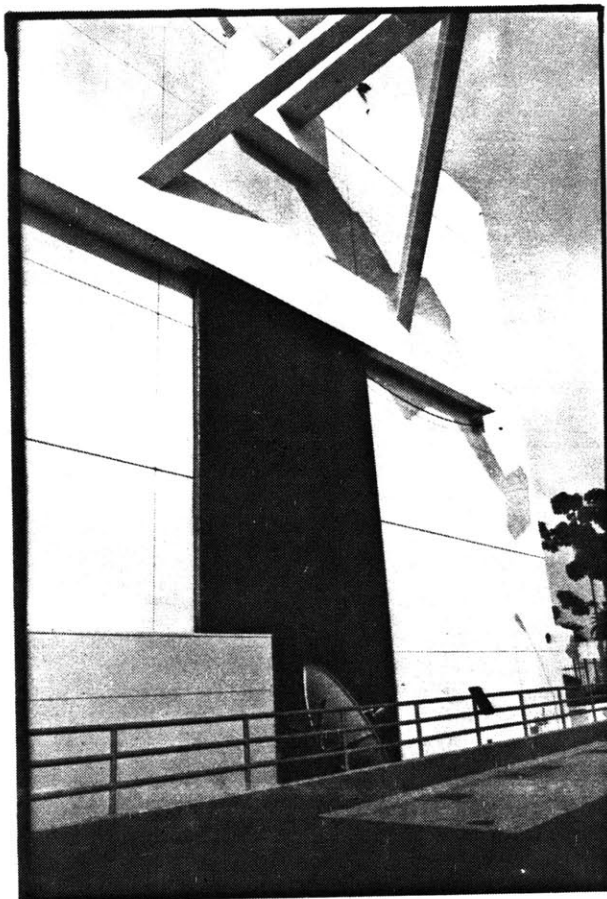
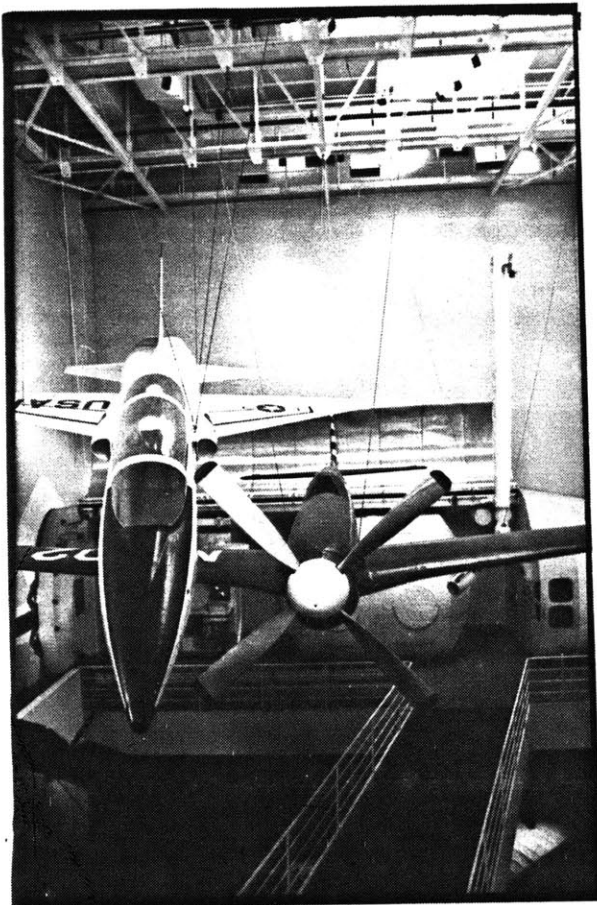


1 Axonometrie

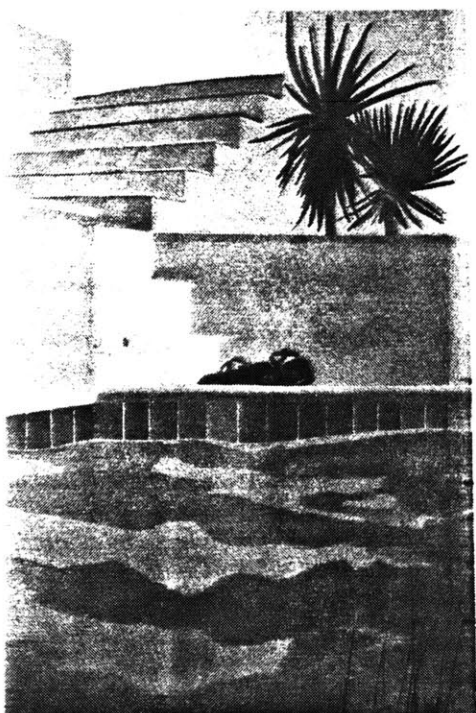


2 Maquette

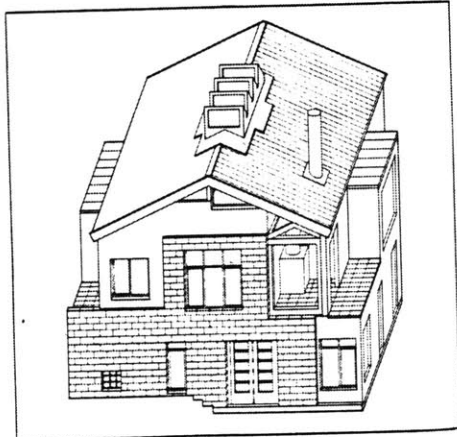
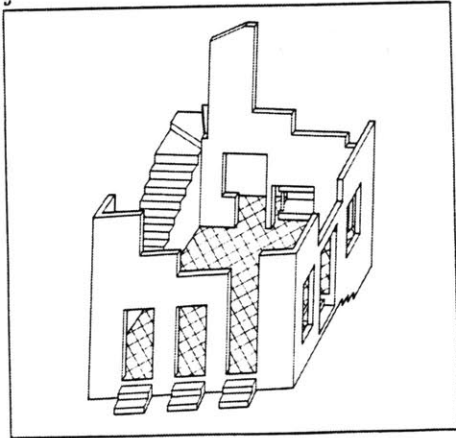
F. Maki - Gallery Tokyo



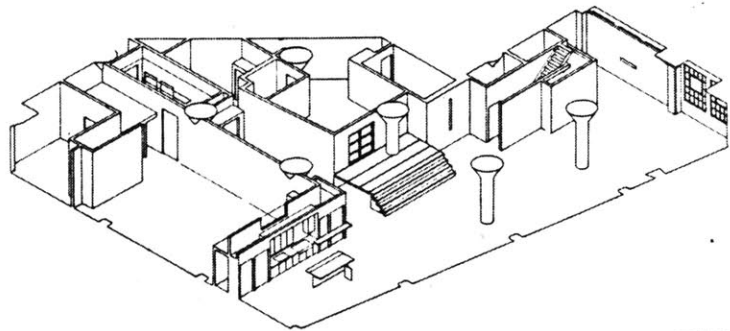
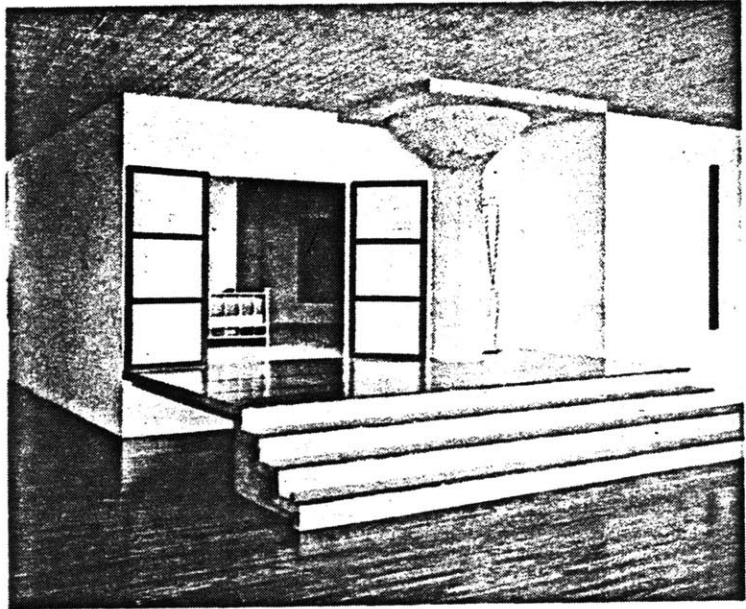
Frank Gehry - Areospace Museum



Hockney in LA

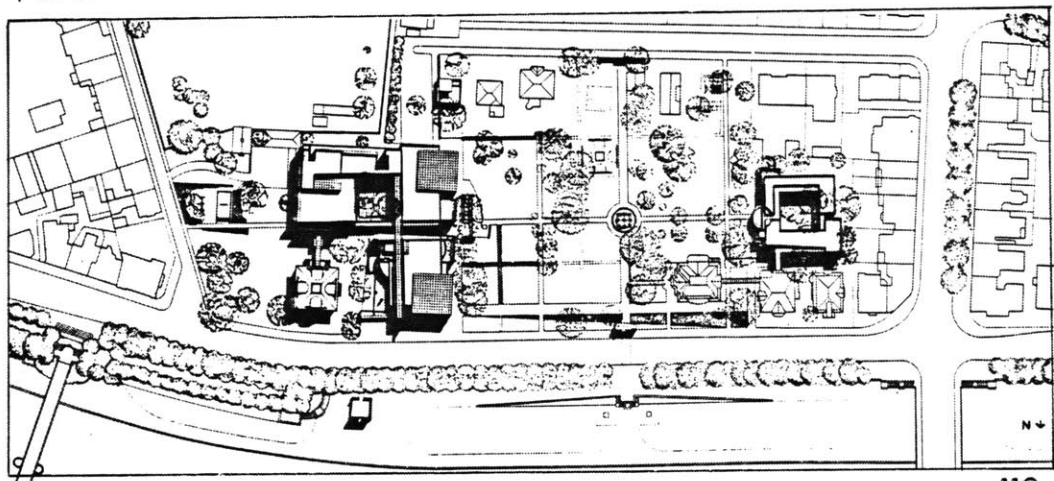


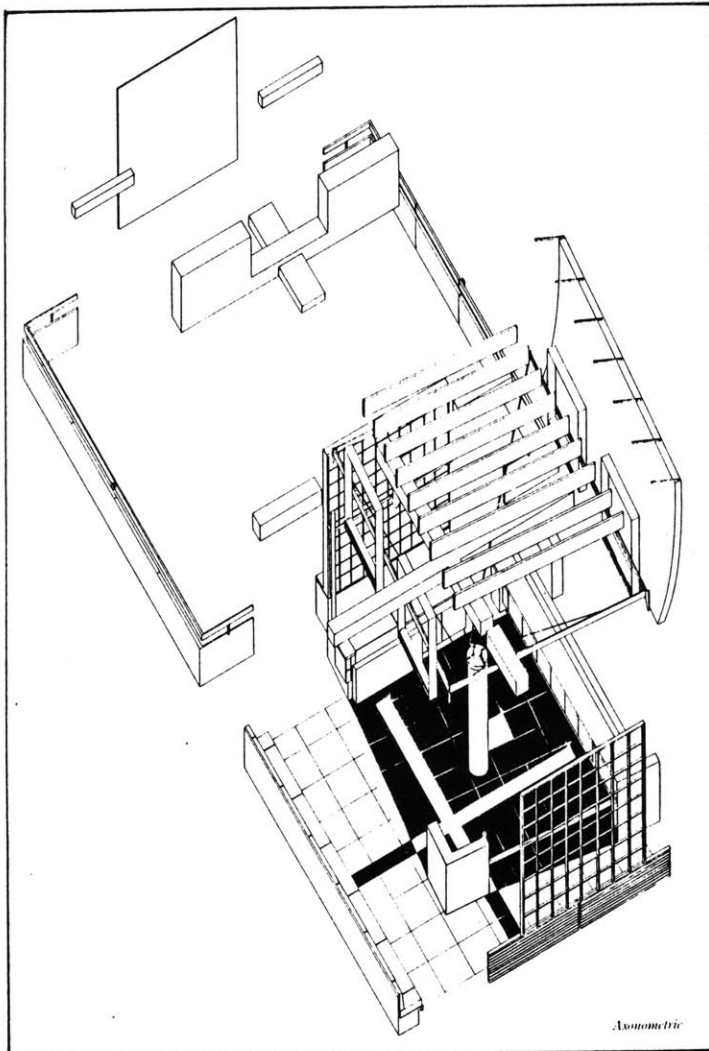
Jorgensen Res.



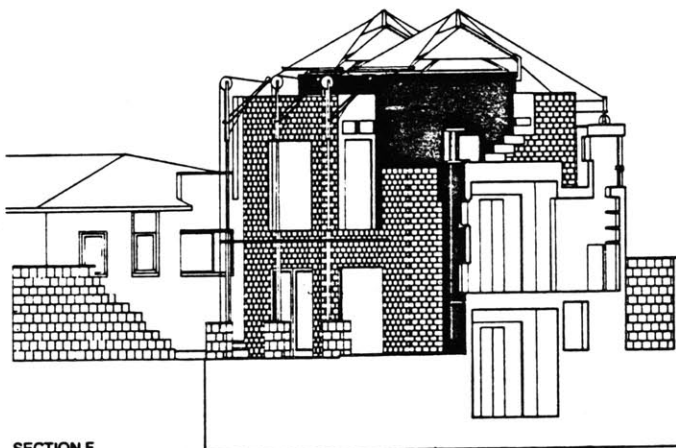
Frederick Fisher - Vena Mondt Loft, L.A.

Meier





Morphosis - 72 Market Street



Morphosis - Residence-Venice

120



6

Lawrence Residence

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Von Eckardt, Wolf; *Erich Mendelson*, George Brazillier, New York, 1960

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"Concours International pour Le Parc de la Villette", *Architecture D'Aujordhui*, Projects et Realizations, Feb 1983, pp.72-83

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Global Architecture, (GA) Hans Scharoun, Berlin Philharmonie

Process 26: Chernecov

